



~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

"come just as you are"

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing

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Worship Music

[One Minute Sermon](#)

[Don't Give Up The Fight-Revive](#)

[Blink-Revive](#)

Prayer

Lord, I want to repent for ever being a source of offense to anyone. I am asking You to forgive me for fighting to prove my point in the past when I should have just gone to that other person and apologized, asking for his forgiveness. If I ever find out I've offended someone again, please help me deal with it more maturely than I have in the past. Jesus, I also need You to help me remember that when others do things that make me sad or that disappoint me, they probably didn't mean to do it. Help me give them the same mercy and grace that I hope others will give me, in Jesus'. Amen.....

Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

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Matthew 24:36 (AMP)

36 But of that [exact] day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

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Mark 3:1-35 (AMP)

1 AGAIN JESUS went into a synagogue, and a man was there who had one withered hand [as the result of accident or disease]. 2 And [the Pharisees] kept watching Jesus [closely] to see whether He would cure him on the Sabbath, so that they might get a charge to bring against Him [formally]. 3 And He said to the man who had the withered hand, Get up [and stand here] in the midst. 4 And He said to them, Is it lawful and right on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to take it? But they kept silence. 5 And He glanced around at them with vexation and anger, grieved at the hardening of their hearts, and said to the man, Hold out your hand. He held it out, and his hand was [completely] restored. 6 Then the Pharisees went out and immediately held a consultation with the Herodians against Him, how they might [devise some means to] put Him to death. 7 And Jesus retired with His disciples to the lake, and a great throng from Galilee followed Him. Also from Judea 8 And from Jerusalem and Idumea and from beyond the Jordan and from about Tyre and Sidon—a vast multitude, hearing all the many things that He was doing, came to Him. 9 And He told His disciples to have a little boat in [constant] readiness for Him because of the crowd, lest they press hard upon Him and crush Him. 10 For He had healed so many that all who had distressing bodily diseases kept falling upon Him and pressing upon Him in order that they might touch Him. 11 And the spirits, the unclean ones, as often as they might see Him, fell down before Him and kept screaming out, You are the Son of God! 12 And He charged them strictly and severely under penalty again and again that they should not make Him known. 13 And He went up on the hillside and called to Him [for Himself] those whom He wanted and chose, and they came to Him. 14 And He appointed twelve to continue to be with Him, and that He might send them out to preach [as apostles or special messengers] 15 And to have authority and power to heal the sick and to drive out demons: 16 [They were] Simon, and He surnamed [him] Peter; 17 James son of Zebedee and John the brother of James, and He surnamed them Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder; 18 And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew (Nathaniel), and Matthew, and Thomas, and James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus (Judas, not Iscariot), and Simon the Cananaean [also called Zelotes], 19 And Judas Iscariot, he who betrayed Him. 20 Then He went to a house [probably Peter's], but a throng came together again, so that Jesus and His disciples could not even take food. 21 And when those who belonged to Him (His kinsmen) heard it, they went out to take Him by force, for they kept saying, He is out of His mind (beside Himself, deranged)! 22 And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, He is possessed by Beelzebub, and, By [the help of] the prince of demons He is casting out demons. 23 And He summoned them to Him and said to them in parables (illustrations or comparisons put beside truths to explain them), How can Satan drive out Satan? 24 And if a kingdom is divided and rebelling against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. 25 And if a house is divided (split into factions and rebelling) against itself, that house will not be able to last. 26 And if Satan has raised an insurrection against himself and is divided, he cannot stand but is [surely] coming to an end. 27 But no one can go into a strong man's house and ransack his household goods right and left and seize them as plunder unless he first binds the strong man; then indeed he may [thoroughly] plunder his house. 28 Truly and solemnly I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever abusive and blasphemous things they utter; 29 But whoever speaks abusively against or maliciously misrepresents the Holy Spirit can never get forgiveness, but is guilty of and is in the grasp of an everlasting trespass. 30 For they persisted in saying, He has an unclean spirit. 31 Then His mother and His brothers came and, standing outside, they sent word to Him, calling [for] Him. 32 And a crowd was sitting around Him, and they said to Him, Your mother and Your brothers and Your sisters are outside asking for You. 33 And He replied, Who are My mother and My brothers? 34 And looking around on those who sat in a circle about Him, He said, See! Here are My mother and My brothers; 35 For whoever does the things God wills is My brother and sister and mother!

Chapter 3

And he entered again into the synagogue (Mar 3:1);

This was on the Sabbath day.

and there was a man there which had a withered hand. And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the Sabbath day; that they might accuse him. And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth. And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace. And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other (Mar 3:1-5).

Sabbath day, Jesus came to the synagogue. There was a man there with a withered hand, and so immediately it created a stir as the Pharisees watched Him to see if He would violate their traditional interpretation of the Sabbath day law. For according to their interpretation of the law, it was unlawful to heal a person on the Sabbath day. You could save a person's life, do what was necessary to save the life, but do nothing towards healing. Apply a tourniquet, stop the flow of blood to save his life, but don't put a band-aid on or don't wrap it up, don't wash it, don't put any salve on, because that's ministering towards his healing. And you can't do that until the sun goes down. You can't do that until the Sabbath day is over. Nothing to heal a person on the Sabbath day; only to save the life.

Now, they understood Jesus even better than His own disciples, because they knew that Jesus would immediately be interested in the man with the withered hand. They knew that Jesus could never face any crippling area in a person's life without desiring to minister to that person and to help them. They knew instinctively that Jesus always sought to heal the blight of man when he came face to face with it. And they knew that He would be interested in the man in the synagogue with the greatest need. And so, they watched Him to see if He would heal Him, because it was the Sabbath day. So many times we feel that Jesus isn't interested in us because our needs are too great. Jesus only likes to chum with the beautiful people, with the successful, with the prosperous. But the person that Jesus is always most interested in is the person who has the greatest need. And so it was when He came into the synagogue. They were correct in their assessment of Jesus. They were absolutely correct. He was immediately interested in that man in the synagogue who had the greatest need. He was immediately interested in that man with the withered hand.

And Jesus said to Him, "Stand up." The man stood up. And Jesus then asked them two questions, "Is it lawful to do good or to do evil on the Sabbath day?" Naturally, it's lawful to do good. They could not answer Him. He had them trapped. They could not say, "It's lawful to do evil," and yet, it would be evil not to help this man if you had the capacity to do so. Is it lawful to heal or to kill? Well, it's never lawful to kill a person. And so, again they're trapped. They can't answer and they don't answer. And He looks upon them with anger because of the hardness of their hearts. They, because of their religious traditions, would keep this man from experiencing the power of God in his life. They would keep him from the work that God wanted to do in setting him free, because it was not according to their religious traditions, or their theological positions.

There are people today who would hold back the work of God in needy lives because it doesn't fit with their theological position. They would hold back God's power, God's healing power, because it doesn't fit with their theological position that all miracles ceased with the apostles. And so, they would hold back the work of God in needy lives just because it doesn't fit with their theology. And this upset Jesus, that they, by their rigid traditions, would actually hold back the work of God for this needy man. He looked upon them with anger; an emotion you seldom relate with Jesus, and yet we find Him angry when they were selling the doves and all in the temple precincts and exchanging money and all. And He was angry, made a scourge and drove them out. Angry always with the blind religious fervencies of man. How it would upset Him that man could be blinded by His religion. When God is seeking to establish a vital, life-changing relationship, people try and formalize it into a religious system.

Jesus said to Him, "Stretch forth your hand." It's impossible. The man knew it was impossible; Jesus knew it was impossible when He told him to do it. And because it was impossible, the man can do one of two things: he can either argue with Jesus and tell him that he can't and tell him why he can't, and tell him how many times he's tried and failed, and tell him of all his past failures, rehearse his life story of failure. Or he can obey Jesus and stretch forth his hand. He has a choice. He chose to stretch forth his hand, and immediately, as he did, it was made whole just like the other. For a basic law, the moment you choose to will, to obey the command of Christ, in that very moment He will give you everything necessary for you to obey.

The Lord, many times, says to us things that to us are impossible. As He faces that blighted area in our life, that thing that has been destroying us and keeping us from real victory: that attitude, that temper, that weakness of our flesh, that area of our failure; and that's the thing that Jesus wants to address Himself to in our lives. Jesus didn't talk to him about his good hand and how well he was able to use the good hand. He was interested in the hand that wasn't working. He's interested in your life those things that aren't working properly. That's the thing that He wants to address Himself to. And He says to you, "Now be free and be delivered from that character and that part of your nature." You say, "Oh, but Lord, you don't know how hard I've tried and you don't know how long, and you don't know..." Hey, He's not looking for an argument or looking for an excuse. He's telling you to do something. Don't argue with Him. Don't rehearse your past failures. Do it. You say, "But I can't." Of course you can't, but do it anyhow. For if you will will to obey the command of Christ, He'll give you everything necessary. And the moment that you will to do it, you'll say, "I won't do that any more." Because He said, "Now don't do that again." "Oh, but Lord, I don't want to do it again, but you don't know, Lord." No. He said, "Don't do it again. Will to obey!" "All right, Lord, I won't do it again." And the moment you will to obey, He will give you the capacity and the ability to obey. He will never command you to do anything but what He will give to you the power to obey that command. And He commands all of us to be victorious. He commands all of us to overcome. He commands all of us to be free. He commands all of us to be filled with His Spirit and to live that new life. And if you will will to do it, "Yes, Lord, I will," He'll give you the capacity.

And the Pharisees went forth [after that] (Mar 3:6),

That was enough, they'd had it.

and straightway [they] took council with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him (Mar 3:6).

Look how blind religion can make people. When God works, they want to destroy it. They can't stand to see God work outside of their boundaries, outside of their prescribed borders. They've actually organized, you know, "who can organize better than us? After all, we've been to seminary. And we've got the education, and we know how God can work. And this is how God works." And when God begins to work outside of their little prescribed boundaries, they get upset and want to crush it. "Let's destroy it!"

But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed him, and from Judea, and from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and from beyond Jordan; and they about [that were around] Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things he did, [they] came unto him. And he spake to his disciples, that a small ship should wait on him because of the multitude, lest they should throng him. For he had healed many; insomuch that they pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had [the various] plagues (Mar 3:7-10).

And so, this great surge of people, wanting to get near Jesus, wanting to touch Him. And, of course, if you were there and you had a problem, a disease, a plague, you would be pushing too. You'd be trying to get up close enough just to touch Him. And so, it became difficult for Jesus to move around. So they took this little boat and they just dropped anchor a little ways off shore.

And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and [they] cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God. And he straitly charged them that they should not make him known (Mar 3:11-12).

Now, the demons were crying out, "Thou art the Son of God." "Quiet. Don't tell anybody." Now, And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him. And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils: and Simon he surnamed Peter; and James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder (Mar 3:13-17):

So, Jesus had His own little nicknames for these fellows.

And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alpheus, and Thaddeus [which is also known as Judas, not Iscariot, that's Thadaeus], and Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him: and they went into a house. And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread (Mar 3:18-20).

The crowds were getting around Him so much.

And when his friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He's beside himself (Mar 3:21).

They'd figured He had flipped. He didn't even have time to eat bread, because He was just giving Himself so completely, so completely to the needs of the people. They thought, "Oh, He's flipped; He's beside Himself." Beside himself is a term sort of used for the schizophrenia who talks to himself. So, "All right, quit it. Okay, wait a minute, I'll be with you. All right." And you're talking back and forth to yourself. So, he's beside himself, conversing with himself. And they actually thought He had flipped, probably under the pressure of all of these people gathering around, His friends, His family and all.

And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils. And he called them unto him, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan? And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end. No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house. Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: [and this was] because they said, He hath an unclean spirit (Mar 3:22-30).

Now, their declaration, "He has an unclean spirit; He's doing this by the power of the devil," they were attributing the works of God's Holy Spirit to Satan. This was not the unpardonable sin. This was a sign that they were getting close to the unpardonable sin. The unpardonable sin, the sin for which there is no forgiveness, is the sin of rejecting Jesus Christ. Jesus said, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believed in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. And he that believes is not condemned. But he that believes not is condemned already, seeing he hath not believed on the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light came into the world, but men would not come to the light" (John 3:16-19). That's the unpardonable sin. A man's failure to come to the light, to receive God's provision for his sins. God has made only one provision for man's sins, and that is the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son. If you refuse to come to that, then you are committing the unpardonable sin. If you do not receive Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, there's no other forgiveness in this world or in the world to come. God has provided one way for man to be saved. For you to reject that, there's no other way. That's unpardonable.

Now, when a person has rejected Jesus over and over and over again, and he is faced with the indisputable evidence that Jesus is indeed the Son of God, you have to somehow explain away the miracles and the power in the life of Jesus Christ. And so, people in explaining it away, say, "Ah, He's doing that by hypnosis or something else." And that's just as bad as anything else, you see. That is an indication that you are trying now to rationalize against the plain facts that you can see. You're trying to, with irrational arguments, destroy the evidence concerning Jesus Christ. And that you are doing because you have set your position and your heart against Jesus, "I will not believe in Him; I will not receive Him." And you set your heart and your position, but now you've got to explain away the evidence. And any time a man starts to, by irrational argument, set aside Jesus Christ, that man is close to committing the unpardonable sin, because he's not even believing his own intellect at this point.

And so, when they began to try to explain away this evidence of His power by saying, "He's doing it through the lord of devils," they are now irrationally rejecting that evidence that is right there before them, because they have set in their heart the position of, "We're not going to believe in Him." And you're getting close to the unpardonable sin when you set yourself in such a way that you refuse the obvious evidence before you.

There came then his brethren and his mother, and, [they were] standing without, [and they] sent unto him, calling him (Mar 3:31).

Now, there's a huge crowd of people, and outside they said, "He's beside Himself; He's gone crazy. Let's go down and save Him." And so, His brothers, James, Jude and Simon, and His mother were outside. They sent a message in and they said, "Tell Jesus we're out here. Come on out."

And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without [are outside and they] seek for thee. And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold, my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother (Mar 3:32,34-35).

What Jesus is saying is that there is a bond that comes in the family of God that is deeper than the bond in the human family. When we are followers of Jesus Christ, we come into this deep beautiful inner relationship with each other. So that a person can have a closer relationship with some native in New Guinea, who a few years ago was a cannibal, than you can have with your own blood brothers or sisters, or maybe even an identical twin who isn't saved, if that native is saved. I was over in New Guinea and I had this native chieftain come up to me. He had to speak to me through an interpreter. And he had these spears in his hand. He said, "I used these to kill men. But," he said, "now that they have brought me this," holding up his Bible, "I don't need these any more, and I want to give them to you." And there came an instant bonding between this chieftain and myself. My brother in Jesus. Though we could

not communicate linguistically, we communicated spiritually, as he grabbed hold of me and I grabbed hold of him and we began to embrace each other in the love of Jesus Christ. And how I felt God's love just pouring out from that man to me. And how I was bonded to him in the Spirit, as I realized, "This man's my brother in Jesus." It was a tremendous spiritual experience for me, being bonded by the Spirit to this native who just not too many years ago was a cannibal. But now, because of the work of God's grace in his life, he's a brother in Christ. And though we are culturally worlds apart, though linguistically we cannot communicate, yet there was such a spiritual communication and a spiritual bond that I've never felt quite that experience of bonding before as I did with that native chieftain as we stood there in the village and embraced each other. My brother in Jesus Christ.

And that's what Jesus is saying, "Hey, these are My brothers, these are My sisters, these are My mothers. Whoever does the will of My Father, whoever is walking with Me, the same is My mother, My sister, My brother." We're the family of God. We've been bonded to each other through that common relationship with Jesus Christ. We're one, together in Him, the body of Christ. Oh, may God help us to realize this beautiful bond that exists, as we are one in Jesus, bonded together in the family of God by His love of us.

Now, inasmuch as Jesus took this attitude towards Mary, for another gospel said He said, "Who is My mother? Who are My brothers?" And this He did here also, "Who is My mother? Who is My brother?" I think it's rather chancy to ask Mary to do favors for you. "Holy, Mary, mother of God, have mercy on us sinners, in this our hour of death." Wait a minute. "Who is My mother?" Hey, why not go directly to the source? Therefore, let us come boldly to the throne of grace to make our requests known, seeing that Jesus has opened the door and laid the way. Oh, how glorious it is, that we can come directly to God through Jesus Christ.

So, next week we'll begin with chapter four. May the Lord be with you, watch over and keep you in His love. May the Spirit of God just take the word of God and continue to refresh our minds and our hearts in God's truth. This week, may the Lord bring back to us in our times of need that word that we have put in our hearts and have studied together. And may we grow together in the family of God into that fullness, into that completeness, that He would have us to experience and know in Jesus Christ. God bless you; God keep you. And may He use you this week to spread abroad through all the land that work of Jesus Christ that He has wrought in your life.



Mark 4:1-41 (AMP)

1 AGAIN JESUS began to teach beside the lake. And a very great crowd gathered about Him, so that He got into a ship in order to sit in it on the sea, and the whole crowd was at the lakeside on the shore. 2 And He taught them many things in parables (illustrations or comparisons put beside truths to explain them), and in His teaching He said to them: 3 Give attention to this! Behold, a sower went out to sow. 4 And as he was sowing, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. 5 Other seed [of the same kind] fell on ground full of rocks, where it had not much soil; and at once it sprang up, because it had no depth of soil; 6 And when the sun came up, it was scorched, and because it had not taken root, it withered away. 7 Other seed [of the same kind] fell among thorn plants, and the thistles grew and pressed together and utterly choked and suffocated it, and it yielded no grain. 8 And other seed [of the same kind] fell into good (well-adapted) soil and brought forth grain, growing up and increasing, and yielded up to thirty times as much, and sixty times as much, and even a hundred times as much as had been sown. 9 And He said, He who has ears to hear, let him be hearing [and let him consider, and comprehend]. 10 And as soon as He was alone, those who were around Him, with the Twelve [apostles], began to ask Him about the parables. 11 And He said to them, To you has been entrusted the mystery of the kingdom of God [that is, the secret counsels of God which are hidden from the ungodly]; but for those outside [of our circle] everything becomes a parable, 12 In order that they may [indeed] look and look but not see and perceive, and may hear and hear but not grasp and comprehend, lest haply they should turn again, and it [their willful rejection of the truth] should be forgiven them. 13 And He said to them, Do you not discern and understand this parable? How then is it possible for you to discern and understand all the parables? 14 The sower sows the Word. 15 The ones along the path are those who have the Word sown [in their hearts], but when they hear, Satan comes at once and [by force] takes away the message which is sown in them. 16 And in the same way the ones sown upon stony ground are those who, when they hear the Word, at once receive and accept and welcome it with joy; 17 And they have no real root in themselves, and so they endure for a little while; then when trouble or persecution arises on account of the Word, they immediately are offended (become displeased, indignant, resentful) and they stumble and fall away. 18 And the ones sown among the thorns are others who hear the Word; 19 Then the cares and anxieties of the world and distractions of the age, and the pleasure and delight and false glamour and deceitfulness of riches, and the craving and passionate desire for other things creep in and choke and suffocate the Word, and it becomes fruitless. 20 And those sown on the good (well-adapted) soil are the ones who hear the Word and receive and accept and welcome it and bear fruit—some thirty times as much as was sown, some sixty times as much, and some [even] a hundred times as much. 21 And He said to them, Is the lamp brought in to be put under a peck measure or under a bed, and not [to be put] on the lampstand? 22 [Things are hidden temporarily only as a means to revelation.] For there is nothing hidden except to be revealed, nor is anything [temporarily] kept secret except in order that it may be made known. 23 If any man has ears to hear, let him be listening and let him perceive and comprehend. 24 And He said to them, Be careful what you are hearing. The measure [of thought and study] you give [to the truth you hear] will be the measure [of virtue and knowledge] that comes back to you—and more [besides] will be given to you who hear. 25 For to him who has will more be given; and from him who has nothing, even what he has will be taken away [by force], 26 And He said, The kingdom of God is like a man who scatters seed upon the ground, 27 And then continues sleeping and rising night and day while the seed sprouts and grows and increases—he knows not how. 28 The earth produces [acting] by itself—first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. 29 But when the grain is ripe and permits, immediately he sends forth [the reapers] and puts in the sickle, because the harvest stands ready. 30 And He said, With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable shall we use to illustrate and explain it? 31 It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all seeds upon the earth; 32 Yet after it is sown, it grows up and becomes the greatest of all garden herbs and puts out large branches, so that the birds of the air are able to make nests and dwell in its shade. 33 With many such parables [Jesus] spoke the Word to them, as they were able to hear and to comprehend and understand. 34 He did not tell them anything without a parable; but privately to His disciples (those who were peculiarly His own) He explained everything [fully]. 35 On that same day [when] evening had come, He said to them, Let us go over to the other side [of the lake]. 36 And leaving the throng, they took Him with them, [just] as He was, in the boat [in which He was sitting]. And other boats were with Him. 37 And a

38 furious storm of wind [of hurricane proportions] arose, and the waves kept beating into the boat, so that it was already becoming filled. 38 But He [Himself] was in the stern [of the boat], asleep on the [leather] cushion; and they awoke Him and said to Him, Master, do You not care that we are perishing? 39 And He arose and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, Hush now! Be still (muzzled)! And the wind ceased (sank to rest as if exhausted by its beating) and there was [immediately] a great calm (a perfect peacefulness). 40 He said to them, Why are you so timid and fearful? How is it that you have no faith (no firmly relying trust)? 41 And they were filled with great awe and feared exceedingly and said one to another, Who then is this, that even wind and sea obey Him?

Shall we turn now in our Bibles to the gospel according to Mark, chapter 4.

Beginning in chapter 4, we have the beginning of the ministry of Christ in parables. There is often times a mistaken opinion as to the reason why Jesus went to parables. The purpose of a parable is really not to veil the truth, but to illustrate the truth. And many times when people become dull of hearing, where they will not receive just straight teaching, when you've lost the attention of your students, a method by which attention can be drawn back again to the subject is by illustration. Tell a story. We are, all of us, very interested in life and in things of life, and when you start to tell a story, suddenly people are paying attention again. And in the story you are able to subtly able to illustrate the truth that you are trying to point out. In each of the parables of Jesus there were truths that were being illustrated, truths that the people would not listen to on just a straight teaching method. And so, the parable form of teaching was adopted, that you might continue to bring them the truth. Only now in a more subtle way.

Some of the parables the people understood, understood very well. In fact, in some of the parables of Jesus, the Pharisees got very angry with Him when they realized, "Uh-oh, that one hit us." And many of the parables were directed against the Pharisees and their attitudes. Sometimes the thought that was being illustrated still went right over their head, but Jesus would then explain it to his disciples when they'd say, "Lord, what were You trying to get across?" And He would explain the parable to them in their private sessions.

Now, Jesus said that these are pretty much the key to all of the parables, these parables concerning the kingdom of heaven. We covered these in Matthew's gospel, chapter 13. And Mark does add just a little bit that Matthew did not give to us.

And he began again to teach by the sea side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land (Mar 4:1).

We remember last week that He ordered a little ship that He might be in it, because at this point the crowds were beginning to throng Him. Someone had discovered that by touching Jesus they were healed. And so, everywhere Jesus would go, people began to reach out to touch Him. In verse 10 of the previous chapter, "For He had healed many, insomuch that they pressed upon Him to touch Him, as many as had plagues." And so, it became a common practice if you had something wrong just to touch Him. And you can imagine how, after a time, that could be pretty vexing when people are pushing and shoving to get near you just so that they can touch you.

And so, when the multitudes were gathered . . . and multitudes means multitudes. And we'll be getting to that in a little bit. When they were out on the other side of the sea, when the people gathered, it said there were five thousand men beside women and children. So, if you assume that for every man there was a woman and maybe one child, you could have as many as fifteen thousand people that had gathered in a deserted area to hear Him. So, you can imagine the tremendous crowds that were now moving with Him, necessitating His having to get a little boat and just shove off and be out in the water just a little bit so that He could address all of the people without being thronged or pressed by them. "And so, he began to teach by the seaside. There was gathered unto Him a great multitude so He entered into a little ship and sat there in the ship by the shore; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land."

And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine, Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow: And it came to pass, as he sowed, [that] some fell by the wayside, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up. And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth: But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit. And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased, and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some a hundred. And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear (Mar 4:2-9).

Now, these people were basically an agrarian society. Practically everyone was involved in some way or other in agriculture. Even those who lived in the cities had their plot of ground in the country. And they all had their stone houses on their plot of grounds with their towers. And they would go out and plant in their fields and they would harvest, and live sort of out during the period of planting and harvesting, and then move into the towns in the winter times. But they were, all of them, close to the soil, an agrarian society. And thus, as Jesus is talking to them about farming, about sowing seed, He's taking something that is very familiar and very common with all of them. And as He describes the various types of conditions that the seed falls on, it was something that was extremely familiar to all of them.

I heard a very interesting lecture from a sociologist who was talking about the change that is taking place in America, as we have shifted from an agrarian society to an industrial society, urbanization. And the effect that it has had upon our whole social life in the United States, in the family and in our attitude towards children, or having children. In an agrarian society, children are welcome. Every child born to the farmer represents about ten thousand dollars worth of labor by the time the child reaches eighteen years of age. They learn to do their chores early. They learn to drive the tractor. They learn how to plow a field. They learn how to work on the harvesters. And a child is looked upon as a blessing, because he is an asset. And that is the reason why so many times on the farms they had big families, a lot of children. And they were all welcome, and boys more than girls, because they were able to work harder in the fields.

But moving from an agrarian society to our urbanized type of society and industrial type of society, every child that is born represents a liability. They estimate now that it will cost you approximately \$60,000 to take and raise your child from infancy to eighteen years old or

through college. So, every child that is born, you say, "Who needs it? Another expense." And it definitely affects the way that we look upon children that come into the home. And this sociologist was saying, unless you understand this, you cannot understand the problems that we are faced with in our society today, as far as children are concerned. The rise of child abuse and all of these things that we just can't understand. It can only be understood by the fact that from the turn of the century, the United States has developed from an agrarian society to more of a urbanized industrial society. Where children are no longer an asset, but a liability. What he said seemed to make a lot of sense.

What Jesus said made a lot of sense. He was talking to people about things with which they are familiar, and that is so important. As He is giving this parable. They all had experienced these very things as they sowed their seed. And He was talking about things that were just down-home.

And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable. And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: that seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them (Mar 4:10-12).

Now, is Jesus trying to hide the truth to keep man from conversion? No. As I said, parables are used to attract attention and to illustrate truth. But they were not listening to the teachings any more. And yet, it was important that they still hear the word. And so parables were adopted, even though in hearing, they did not understand. Yet, it was important that they hear. God will be fair when He judges man. Everyone will have a chance to hear, even though they have closed their minds, their hearts. It's an amazing thing when a person's heart is closed to God and to the gospel. It's amazing how we perceive what is being said.

You know, there are people that come to Calvary Chapel out of constraint; their friends have constrained them to come. And it's amazing what they hear me say. Because they're just looking for something to jump on and to get angry about. And they're not really listening at all to the content of the message that we bring. But they are only listening to find something to fault, something to disagree with, something to get angry about, so that they can say, "I'll never go back there again." And they want an excuse not to come back. And so, they're not really hearing and not really wanting to hear.

Now, And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables? (Mar 4:13)

And Jesus is now giving us a key. And in parables there is this expositional constancy. "If you don't know this parable, how are you going to know all parables?" Here is a key to the parables, that is: the word . . . or the seed is the word. This is one of the keys to parables. Whenever in a parable you get to the seed being planted or whatever, know that the seed is the word of God. So He's saying, "Don't you know this parable? Then how are you going to know all parables?" So, He's telling you now this expositional constancy of what represents what.

The sower soweth the word. And these are they by the wayside, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts (Mar 4:14-15).

So, the fowls of the air that come and pluck out the seed is actually Satan, who takes away the seed that is sown. It doesn't even have a chance to get root.

And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard [received] the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and [but they] have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended. And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, and the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful. And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred (Mar 4:16-20).

So, the parable of the sower is how the word of God is received in the hearts of different people. With some people, the seed never has a chance to even root. They're not open to the word of God at all. As soon as it is sown, their mind is set against it, and Satan plucks up that which was sown. It has no effect. There are others who get all excited, receive it with gladness and joy. And of course, we've observed these people. And they start off with a bang, but when persecution comes, a trial or testing, they fall away because there's no real depth. All they've had is an emotional experience. They've had the gladness, the excitement, but there's no real depth at all. And thus, there is that falling away the moment testings come. This third category is the category I'm interested in, because I think that this category covers probably a greater number of people in the church than almost any other category. Those who receive the word; it begins to develop in their lives, but it is among thorns. And the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things choke out the effectiveness of the word in their lives, and so there is no real fruit brought forth by them.

Now, it is the Lord's desire that each of us bring forth much fruit. "Herein is the Father glorified" (John 15:8). Now, it is the Lord's desire that each of us bring forth much fruit. "Herein is the Father glorified, that you bear much fruit." But I think how often a person's work for God is thwarted or limited. That their lives are not really productive for the kingdom, because their hearts are drawn away. They're not sinners, they're not out and out rebellious against God. They love the Lord. They have the right desires for God, but they also have desires for the world, for the things of the world. And thus, their lives never achieve what they should and could achieve for the glory of God because the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for these other things have choked out that full fruitfulness that God would have them to bring forth for Him. It is so difficult to maintain the right priorities in this world today. The pressures of the world are heavy, and it is so difficult to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness in all of the pressures that we are faced in our culture and society, based as it is so much around material things. That's the one that I would study and be most concerned. In my own

life, this is the thing that concerns me most in the parable. Jesus said to His disciples, "You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you and ordained you that you should be My disciples, and that you should bring forth fruit and that your fruit should remain." The greatest desire I have is that my life bring forth fruit that does remain. "Now these are they which are sown on the good ground; they hear the word, they receive it, and they bring forth fruit in varying degrees, some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred." And then he said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick? For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear (Mar 4:21-23). The statement that Jesus is always making as He is speaking, is, "Hey, if you have ears to hear, hear." And unless our ears are open by the Spirit of God, we don't have ears to hear. It is only as the Spirit gives us the capacity. For the natural man does not understand the things of the Spirit, neither can he know them; they are spiritually discerned. But all the way through in the book of Revelation, when Jesus is talking to the church, again over and over, He is saying, "He that hath an ear to hear, let Him hear what the Spirit says to the church." Now, you are the light of the world. A light is intended to illuminate the darkness, not to be hid under a candlestick. A light that God has given to you is not something that you are to just hold for yourself. It is intended to bring light to others. And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear (Mar 4:24):

Now, there is a common thing today of people saying, "Well, you know, let's hear what he has to say." You know, they turn on Channel 18 and that guy is talking with his high squeaky voice. And he's got his flowers and, "Well, let's listen and let's see what he's got to say." The Lord said, "Take heed what you hear." You know, someone says, "Well, I want to hear what they're saying. I want to know what they're saying."

I have a friend who had a very remarkable conversion. He lived out in the area of Victorville. He owned about five different businesses out there; he was an extremely successful person. He owned a tractor agency, he owned an excavating company, and just had many business interests. He was an Episcopalian, very nominal Christian, one of the Christmas/Easter variety. And one night, he had a dream in which he was holding a sick little baby in his hands. And he was praying for that baby and it was healed. And he woke up and it was very vivid. He went back to sleep and this dream repeated itself three times. So, in the morning he called up his priest to share with him this dream about praying for a baby and it was healed. The priest said, "I don't know anything about that. Maybe you should call Paul Smith" (who is my brother), "and he can probably tell you about it." So, this fellow called my brother and my brother talked to him about the Bible, about healing in the Bible and things of this nature. While he was delivering a tractor part to one of his customers in the evening on his way home, the part had come in and the guy was needing it real bad, and he thought, "Well, I'll drop it by his house on my way home." And when he got there, the fellow wasn't there. So, he was explaining to the wife just how to tell her husband the procedures by which the part was to be put on the tractor. And as he was getting ready to go, this little child began to cry in the other room. And the mother went to get it. And he was shocked when she brought the child in, it was crying. It was the child he had seen in his dream. And the mother explained how that the little baby had swallowed some gasoline and had burned the stomach lining, and how that the child would wait until the hunger pains were so great that they were greater than the pain of eating. When the child would eat, the stomach, because of the rawness, would just begin to convulse and the child would be in tremendous pain. And there was really nothing they could do about it but just wait for the slow healing processes. And evidently the child was having the hunger pains again and was crying, and so the mother said, "I guess I'll have to feed it." And she was just really upset. And he said, "Well, ma'am, I don't what's going on; I don't understand this at all, but," he said, "I had a dream and I couldn't understand the dream. But in the dream I was holding a child in my hands, and as I look at your child, it's the child I saw in my dreams. And as I was holding it in my hands, I prayed for it and it was healed. Would it be alright with you if I would hold your child and pray for her?" And she said, "Yes, of course." And so, he took the child in his arms and prayed for her. And the child said, "Mommy, I'm hungry." So, the mother said, "Would you mind waiting while I feed the child?" Because in just a few moments, it'll really start screaming as the food begins to hit the stomach. So, he waited and the child ate. No response at all...completely healed. Well, this guy didn't know what to make of it at this point. Something totally new to him. But needless to say, he really started to dig in the word of God, in the gospel and the book of Acts. He decided that the Lord was maybe calling him into the ministry. And so, he sold his businesses and went to the Claremont School of Theology, which is about as liberal as any institution you can attend. There's more atheism and unbelief, I think, there than probably in most secular universities. And he was sitting in the classes listening to the professors, seeking to discount the miracles, seeking to discount the word of God, seeking to discount Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, resurrection and all of these things. He was only desiring really to get the degree so he could go out and start ministering in the Episcopal priesthood. And so he thought, "I don't believe this junk that they are telling me." And he thought he had his defenses up, and he thought as this stuff was coming out that he was rejecting it and thoroughly rejecting it, and "I know that isn't true; all I want is a degree from this place and get out of here and really start serving the Lord." But day-by-day this junk was pouring in and he was hearing it. "Be careful what you hear." He found that as he was talking with his Christian friends and someone would bring up a scripture, he would say, "Oh, but you can't believe that. You see, in the original that isn't there." And he realized that this junk that was coming in was somehow taking root and was affecting his whole attitude and opinion of the Bible. He ended up one evening in an orange grove out in Upland sitting in his car with a .45 pointed to his skull, ready to pull the trigger. He was so confused by the teaching that he was receiving there at the Claremont School of Theology, he was ready to take his life. It just brought him into a complete confusion. And there, the Lord began to speak to him again. And he, of course, quit Claremont School of Theology and opened up a little church in Big Bear and just started to minister.

But you've got to be careful what you hear, because whatsoever a man sows that shall he also reap. You cannot sow to your flesh, and reap with the spirit. Be careful what goes in your ears. It's going to leave its mark; it's going to have its affect upon you. I don't appreciate people just dumping garbage in my mind. "Be careful what you hear."

With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you (Mar 4:24); By whatever standard you are judging others, that is the standard by which you are going to be judged. and unto you that hear shall more be given. [If you hear the truth.] For he that hath, to him shall be given; and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath. And he said [unto them], So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed [that would be the word,] into the ground; and should sleep, and rises night and day, and

the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come (Mar 4:24-29).

Now, what the Lord is saying is that there is this beautiful unconscious growth taking place as God's word is being planted in your heart. As you come Sunday nights, and as we go over the word, and as you're hearing the word, the seed is being sown, the seed is being planted. And you go home, you sleep, you live life as normal, but the word of God is having its effect. You can't always see it immediately, but there is that growth. First the blade and then the stalk, then the ear, then the full corn. But the word of God will have its effect in your life. And gradually you will see your life being transformed and changed just by the power of the word that is coming into your heart day by day. The glorious power of God's word changing a person's life. For if you sow to the Spirit, then of the Spirit you're going to reap.

Now, sometimes we get restless and we get impatient and we want to see the fruit immediately. You know, we want to plant our seeds like Jack and the Beanstalk and go out the next morning and climb the thing that's fully matured. We would like instant growth, but our spiritual growth is imperceptible many times. There's just that unconscious work on our part. But then we look back and we see how far we've come. "Wow! I can see the work of God; I can see how far the Lord has brought me." And this is just the beauty and the value of God's word being sown in your hearts. You know, without even realizing it, by your being here and God's word being sown in your heart, there are changes that are taking place, slowly gradually, imperceptibly, on a day-by-day basis. But over a period of time, you can see things developing and growing. And oh, how glorious when it begins to really bring forth fruit in your life, when you find that God has really changed your attitudes and things that used to just make you so totally angry and upset, it's just sort of, "Well, they need help. I'll pray for them." And you find that, "Hey, is that me saying that? Wow!" And you can see that God's word has had its effect, a life-changing effect. And it's so unconscious, really. It's not struggling, it's not laboring, it's not trying so hard. "I'm gonna do this now." It's not that big works effort, but it's just that beautiful unconscious work of God's Spirit, transforming me and changing me into the image of Christ, through the effect of the word of God being planted. The seed planted in my heart.

And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it? (Mar 4:30)

So, this is a comparison now.

It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth (Mar 4:31):

A mustard seed is a very tiny little dark seed. It looks like a carnation seed.

But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs (Mar 4:32),

Now, they all had their herb gardens, and they all grew their mint and anise and cumin and rosemary and so forth, their spices, their mustard. And this grows up taller than the rest of those herbs that they grew.

and shooteth out great branches (Mar 4:32);

Wait a minute! This isn't what a mustard plant does. So, here we have an abnormal growth. so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it (Mar 4:32). Uh-oh, things are bad when the fowls of the air...because remember what the fowls represent? Satan, coming in, taking away the seed that was sown.

Christianity is a term that was first used in Antioch by the people of Antioch who put this tag upon those who were living like Christ. They said, "Oh, they're Christ-like." And that is what the term Christian actually means, Christ-like. However, in time, the term has come to a much broader meaning. And it is a term that has been applied like in the Middle East, if you're not a Muslim, then you're a Christian. And in America, if you're not an atheist, you're a Christian. And we used to say a Christian nation, but it's far from a Christian nation. Thus, it is quite obvious that those things that have been done recently in West Beirut, in the Palestinian camps, are not at all Christ-like. For Jesus said, "Love your enemies. Do good unto those that despitefully use you. Bless those that curse you. Bless and curse not." He taught us that we were to love, that we were to forgive, that we were to help. And thus, to say that the Christian militia went in and slaughtered the Palestinians is totally wrong. The militia went in to be sure. But not a Christian militia. Had a Christian militia gone in, they would have taken food and clothing and medicines. And they would have helped those people, because that's what Christ taught us to do. And it is extremely unfortunate that there are enemies of Christ, especially planted in many areas of the news media, who like to pick up on this misnomer of "Christian militia," and to somehow lay the blame of the slaughter of the Palestinians upon all of Christianity or upon all the Jews, whom they also hate.

And so we see very sad caricatures of Christianity or Christians. Such as what was in the Register this week, where you have this ghoulish looking character with a gun smoking and tramping over the bodies in refugee camp number two, and underneath the caption, "Onward Christian Soldiers." The Santa Ana Register is making an attack against everyone of you who believe in Jesus Christ. They are ridiculing your faith. It is a definite attack upon every true child of God. It's a blasphemous attack. It's an unfair attack. But they don't care about fairness in their war. But we, in being Christ-like, must obey and follow Jesus Christ. And we must love and we must forgive. There is, throughout the world, still a very strong anti-Semitism feeling in the hearts of the many people. This has existed for centuries. And people are just looking for some excuse to hate the Jew or to be mad at the Jew. Paul the apostle represented the feelings of every true Christian where he said, "My heart's desire and prayer for Israel is that they might be saved. And I could wish myself accursed for God for my brother's sake, that they might know Jesus Christ." But unfortunately, in the name of Christianity, in the name of the church, the Jews have been persecuted through the centuries.

Our guide in Israel told us that his very first exposure to Christianity was as a boy in Argentina. When he first went to public school, the first day, he was beat up by the other boys, as they called him a Christ-killer. And he said every day he had to run home from school, rocks being thrown at him as he was called a Christ-killer. He said, "I didn't even know who Christ was. But," he said, "I learned to hate Him because of what was happening to me." How in the world can you ever win someone to Jesus Christ if you hate them like that? Hatred is something far, far from Jesus and the teachings of Jesus, for any group, for any ethnic group. Surely Jesus did teach us that we are all one. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, barbarian, Scythian, bond or free, but Christ is all and in all" (Galatians 3:28). And a true child of God sees it that way. A true child of God has to be colorblind. For God made us all and God loves us all and Jesus died for all. And there is no superior race; we are all one. We all belong to the human race; we are all one.

These attitudes that have arisen have not arisen from true Christianity, though many of them have prevailed in the church. And unfortunately in many churches today, there are still areas of strong feelings of anti-this and anti-that, and that's sad indeed. And so, within the church, under its shadow, all kinds of horrible things have found refuge. Within the church today, this super World Council of Churches, every kind of fowl exists. Things are being done in the name of the church or Christianity that have nothing to do with Jesus Christ. Enemies of Christ even, working from within the church. So, "when it is sown, it becomes greater than all of the herbs, shoots out great branches." That's abnormal growth. That's not the true growth, that's abnormal growth. "The fowls of the air may lodge in the shadow."

And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it. But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples. And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side (Mar 4:33-35).

Notice the words, "Let us pass over to the other side."

And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship so that it was now full. And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? (Mar 4:36-38)

Jesus must have been extremely tired, having all of these multitudes of people pressing Him, grabbing Him, touching Him. So that, as they started to cross the sea, He fell asleep. And such a deep sleep, that as the storm came up and the ship was being tossed, he continued to sleep. Until finally, the ship was almost full of water. And so they came back and they woke him up and they said, "Master, don't you care if we perish?"

And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm (Mar 4:39).

Tremendous power!

And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? (Mar 4:40)

First He rebuked the wind and the waves, and then He rebuked the disciples. He rebuked them for having no faith. Why would He do that? The ship was full of water; it looked like it was going to sink. Why would He rebuke them for not having faith? Because you go back to the beginning, what He first said, "Let us pass over unto the other side." He didn't say, "Let's go under." He said, "Let us pass over to the other side." And when Jesus said, "Let us pass over to the other side," there's no way they could go under. You see, this is God speaking, and God's word must come to pass. And that's why He rebuked them; for little faith. Because they had His word that they were going to go over to the other side. He had told them, "Now, be careful what you hear." They weren't careful what they heard, you see.

And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him? (Mar 4:41)

Mark 5:1-43 (AMP)

1 THEY CAME to the other side of the sea to the region of the Gerasenes. 2 And as soon as He got out of the boat, there met Him out of the tombs a man [under the power] of an unclean spirit. 3 This man continually lived among the tombs, and no one could subdue him any more, even with a chain; 4 For he had been bound often with shackles for the feet and handcuffs, but the handcuffs of [light] chains he wrenched apart, and the shackles he rubbed and ground together and broke in pieces; and no one had strength enough to restrain or tame him. 5 Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always shrieking and screaming and beating and bruising and cutting himself with stones. 6 And when from a distance he saw Jesus, he ran and fell on his knees before Him in homage, 7 And crying out with a loud voice, he said, What have You to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? [What is there in common between us?] I solemnly implore you by God, do not begin to torment me! 8 For Jesus was commanding, Come out of the man, you unclean spirit! 9 And He asked him, What is your name? He replied, My name is Legion, for we are many. 10 And he kept begging Him urgently not to send them [himself and the other demons] away out of that region. 11 Now a great herd of hogs was grazing there on the hillside. 12 And the demons begged Him, saying, Send us to the hogs, that we may go into them! 13 So He gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out [of the man] and entered into the hogs; and the herd, numbering about 2,000, rushed headlong down the steep slope into the sea and were drowned in the sea. 14 The hog feeders ran away, and told [it] in the town and in the country. And [the people] came to see what it was that had taken place. 15 And they came to Jesus and looked intently and searchingly at the man who had been a demoniac, sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, [the same man] who had had the legion [of demons]; and they were seized with alarm and struck with fear. 16 And those who had seen it related in full what had happened to the man possessed by demons and to the hogs. 17 And they began to beg [Jesus] to leave their neighborhood. 18 And when He had stepped into the boat, the man who had been controlled by the unclean spirits kept begging Him that he might be with Him. 19 But Jesus refused to permit him, but said to him, Go home to your own [family and relatives and friends] and bring back word to them of how much the Lord has done for you, and [how He has] had sympathy for you and mercy on you. 20 And he departed and began to publicly proclaim in Decapolis [the region of the ten cities] how much Jesus had done for him, and all the people were astonished and marveled. 21 And when Jesus had recrossed in the boat to the other side, a great throng gathered about Him, and He was at the lakeshore. 22 Then one of the rulers of the synagogue came up, Jairus by name; and seeing Him, he prostrated himself at His feet 23 And begged Him earnestly, saying, My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay Your hands on her, so that she may be healed and live. 24 And Jesus went with him; and a great crowd kept following Him and pressed Him from all sides [so as almost to suffocate Him]. 25 And there was a woman who had had a flow of blood for twelve years, 26 And who had endured much suffering under [the hands of] many physicians and had spent all that she had, and was no better but instead grew worse. 27 She had heard the reports concerning Jesus, and she came up behind Him in the throng and touched His garment, 28 For she kept saying, If I only touch His garments, I shall be restored to health. 29 And immediately her flow of blood was dried up at the source, and [suddenly] she felt in her body that she was healed of her [distressing] ailment. 30 And Jesus, recognizing in Himself that the power proceeding from Him had gone forth, turned around immediately in the crowd and said, Who touched My clothes? 31 And the disciples kept saying to Him, You see the crowd pressing hard around You from all sides, and You ask, Who touched Me? 32 Still He kept looking around to see her who had done it. 33 But the woman, knowing what had been done for her, though alarmed and frightened and trembling, fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. 34 And He said to her, Daughter, your faith (your trust and confidence in Me, springing from faith in God) has restored you to health. Go in (into) peace and be continually healed and freed from your [distressing bodily] disease. 35 While He was still speaking, there came some from the ruler's house, who said [to Jairus], Your daughter has died. Why bother and distress the Teacher any further? 36 Overhearing but ignoring what they said, Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue, Do not be seized with alarm and struck with fear; only keep on believing. 37 And He permitted no one to accompany Him except Peter and James and John the brother of James. 38 When they arrived at the house of the ruler of the synagogue, He looked [carefully and with understanding] at [the] tumult and the people weeping and wailing loudly. 39 And when He had gone in, He said to them, Why do you make an uproar and weep? The little girl is not dead but is sleeping. 40 And they laughed and jeered at Him. But He put them all out, and, taking the child's father and mother and those who were with Him, He went in where the little girl was lying. 41 Gripping her [firmly] by the hand, He said to her, Talitha cumi—which translated is, Little girl, I say to you, arise [from the sleep of death]! 42 And instantly the girl got up and started walking around—for she was twelve years old. And they were utterly astonished and overcome with amazement. 43 And He strictly commanded and warned them that no one should know this, and He [expressly] told them to give her [something] to eat.

Chapter 5

And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes (Mar 5:1).

Now, that is on the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee. It is the area near the beginning of the Golan Heights and Gilead. The area when Moses was bringing the people toward the land for their conquest, they had passed over the other side of the Jordan and had gone up in the area through Moab, and up to the area of the Ammonites and all, which was this area to the east of the Sea of Galilee. And the tribe of Gad came to Moses and said, "Look, we are cattlemen and this is great grazing land and all. We would just as soon have our inheritance here," because they had defeated the Ammonite kings and all. And they said, "We would just as soon stay here and live. And we really don't care for an inheritance in the land." And half the tribe of Manasseh was with them.

So, of course, Joshua was upset at their request because he was afraid that their wanting to stay there might discourage the rest of the people from coming in and taking the land. And they said, "No, we'll send our troops to fight, but when it's all over, we'd like to come back and settle here. We like this land." And so, the tribe of Gad and half the tribe of Manasseh were given this area to settle. So the people came to be known as the Gadarenes, who were living on that side of the Jordan and the Sea of Galilee. And so, they came over to the area of the Gadarenes. And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him [a very fierce man who was living there] out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains (Mar 5:2-3):

When this demon power would take control of his life, he had super human strength. They could not even hold him with chains.

Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him (Mar 5:4).

A tremendously pitiful sight, a man possessed by demon spirits.

And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones (Mar 5:5).

And so Mark, here, paints for us a very vivid picture of a tormented soul.

But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him (Mar 5:6),

But Jesus will have nothing to do with the worship of evil spirits.

And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not. For he [Jesus had] said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit. And he [Jesus] asked him [that is, the spirit in the man], What is thy name? And he answered, saying, My name is Legion: for we are many. And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country (Mar 5:7-10).

Luke's gospel tells that they begged not to be sent to the abyss. We'll talk about that more when we get to Luke's gospel.

Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine [that were] feeding. And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. And forthwith Jesus gave them leave [permission]. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine; and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (there were about two thousand,) and [they] were choked in the sea (Mar 5:11-13).

Now, it would be wrong to assume that there were two thousand demons in the man. The swine probably, when the demons infested some of them, they probably began to be wild and the rest of them, like a herd of cattle and all, just sort of followed and went right down into the sea, as they began to just panic and go together.

Now, why would Jesus allow these demons the freedom of going into the swine? Well, you go back to the Mosaic law and you find that they weren't to keep swine; that was a forbidden meat under the law. This was an illegal venture raising swine. And so, this no doubt is the reason why the Lord allowed them that permission to go into the swine, and He got rid of an illegal industry as far as the Jews were concerned.

And they that fed the swine fled, and told it in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done. And they come to Jesus, and they see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, [and he was] sitting, and [he was] clothed, and in his right mind; and they were afraid (Mar 5:14-15).

Here, this man that they couldn't bind with chain and fetters. Here, this man that was out there screaming, crying, cutting himself with rocks and could not be tamed, naked, tragic, horrible spectacle. And now he's seated there, clothed and in his right mind.

And they that saw it told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and also concerning the swine (Mar 5:16).

The witnesses began to tell what had happened. And the people began to beg Jesus.

And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts. And when he was come into the ship (Mar 5:17-18),

They said, "Would you just mind leaving here?"

How inhuman humans can be! Rather than being grateful that this poor wretched man was helped and healed, they were just upset because they had just lost the swine. They were more interested in pigs than they were human beings. Their descendants are still around. People who really don't have a real concern for other's needs, for human beings; they could care less. Especially if it meant a loss of profit to them. And they prayed that He would leave them, the coast.

And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him. Howbeit Jesus suffered him not [would not allow him to go], but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis [that is, the ten cities] how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel (Mar 5:18-20).

This man became a living witness, going around and telling of the great things that Jesus had done.

And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto him; and he was nigh unto the sea. And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jarius by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet, and besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live. So Jesus went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him (Mar 5:21-24). So, coming now back to Capernaum, Jarius, one of the rulers of the synagogue there in Capernaum, came to Jesus, driven by desperation. Because at home, notice, "he besought Him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death." Probably the easiest way to get to

the heart of a man is through his children. To see our children sick, to see them suffering, moves us more than almost anything else. And to see his little daughter dying, we are told that she was about twelve years old. We are also told in another gospel that she was their only little girl. And so, for twelve years she had brought sunshine, life and blessing into the home, as only little girls can do. But now the father's heart is breaking. It's obvious that his little girl is dying, nothing can be done. They have only one hope. He had probably been in a controversy the other day, that Sabbath day when Jesus was there in the synagogue and healed the man with the withered hand. And thought he argued over the violation of the Sabbath, he was in need, he was desperate, driven to come against prejudice to Jesus. Torn between wanting to be by his little daughter's side, but knowing that she had to have help quick. He left the mother with the little daughter, and he himself set out to find Jesus. And when he did, he found Jesus surrounded by a crowd, who were thronging Him. But his desperation pushed him through the crowd until he was standing face to face with Jesus, and he begged Him, "Please come. My little daughter is at the point of death. Just lay Your hand on her and she will be healed." He knew that Jesus could bring healing even to this condition of the point of death. "And Jesus went with him, and many people were following, and thronged Him." The pushing, shoving, rude crowd.

And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, and had suffered many things of many physicians (Mar 5:25-26).

They probably, all of them, had their own cure. And she tried them all.

And had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, when she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched (Mar 5:26-27),

The word touch in Greek is grasped or clasped onto.

his garment. For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. And straightway [immediately] the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague (Mar 5:27-29).

She had set a point of releasing her faith, "The moment I touch, I know I will be healed." Someone wanted to know what the difference between this and positive confession was. Positive confession would be if she continued to hemorrhage to say, "I am healed." That's Christian Science. Also, "I'm not sick, I'm healed," when in fact you are still hemorrhaging and you have your sicknesses. She said, "I know I will be healed the moment I touch." And she was healed. That was just releasing faith and setting a point to release faith. Now, had she gone on hemorrhaging and saying, "I feel great, I'm healed, I'm not hemorrhaging," that would be positive confession. That would not be the truth, though. So there is a definite difference between the two. Twelve years.

According to Jewish law, her husband could not touch her as long as she was hemorrhaging. According to Jewish law, everything she touched was unclean. Whoever touched her would be unclean. Whoever would touch anything she touched would be unclean. Therefore, she could not continue to live with her family, to prepare them food and all, to do their clothes. Finally, according to Jewish law, she could not enter the place of worship as long as she was hemorrhaging. She was ceremonially unclean. And for twelve years, she lived in the shadow of darkness. With Jarius, twelve years he had lived in the sunshine of this beautiful little girl, the light she brought into her home. But the light was going out. With the woman, twelve years she was living in the shadow of this ostracized condition, but a ray of light was shining, a hope. "I know if I can just but touch Him, His garment, I will be healed. And immediately, the fountain of her blood was dried up and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague." She could feel that touch, that healing in that moment.

Have you ever had that kind of a healing, where you actually just felt, "Wow!?" There was one Sunday morning when we were still over in the other little church that I woke up on Sunday morning too sick, too ill to go to church. I got up and I tried to study, but I was feeling so miserable that I could not concentrate; I couldn't get any message together. I was just too miserable, I was just too sick. So, I went downstairs and I woke up Chuck, and I said, "Chuck, you're going to have to go out and preach for me this morning. I'm really too sick, I just can't do it." And he said, "Okay, Dad." And he jumped up and started studying in a hurry. And he came out and took first service. And of course, they announced that I was at home sick, couldn't make it because I was so sick. Which was so true, I was lying in bed just miserable. But they prayed for me that God would heal me. And as I was lying in bed, just as sick as could be, I felt the healing. I jumped up out of bed. And Kay said, "What's wrong with you?" And I said, "I'm healed!" And I went in and got dressed and came on out and took second and third services. I felt the healing. I felt it happening. It was just suddenly there. Glorious thing. Just felt it.

I've had an experience of laying my hand upon a little child who was running a very high fever. And as the elders and I were praying, and my hand was on her forehead, I felt the heat go out from her. I felt her forehead just cool off as we were praying. Her mother was a nurse and had just taken her temperature, and it was up to about 103. And so I said, "I felt the temperature go." She took her temperature again and it was down, normal. I could feel it; I could feel it happening. And this woman could feel it. She knew it happened, she could feel it within herself. And those are beautiful experiences when you actually feel God's touch upon your body. You know it. You don't need someone to tell you it's happened; you know it's happened. You can feel it. And so, immediately, knowing in herself, "she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague."

And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue [this healing] had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, [the crowd,] and said, Who touched my clothes? And his disciples said unto him, [Lord,] thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? (Mar 5:30-31)

You've got to be kidding, Jesus. Trying to make our way through this crowd with all this shuffling and jostling and shoving and pushing, and then You stop and say, "Who touched Me?" Come on! And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing (Mar 5:32).

Now, she knew what had happened, and He knew what had happened. She was probably frightened when He said, "Who touched Me?" because she knew what happened, and very relieved when she heard the logical argument of the disciples, "Lord, you've got to be kidding! Look at the crowd; everybody is touching and pushing." Oh, the crowds around Jesus, and in all the crowd around Him, one woman touched Him. You know, you can be close to Jesus without touching Him. You can be among the press. You can be among the throngs and still not touch Him. Many people thronging Him, one person touching Him. And there's a vast difference. She touched Him. It was a touch of faith, and healing came.

But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her [body], came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth (Mar 5:33).

I mean, she confessed everything.

And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague (Mar 5:34).

Now, inasmuch as this was a common practice, many were touching Him and being healed, we read that in chapter 3, verse 9. And as we continue on in the text, in the next chapter, verse 56, "And whithersoever He entered, into villages, or cities or country, they laid the sick in the streets and besought Him that they might touch if it were but the border of His garment: and as many as touched Him were made whole." This is the only one where Jesus stopped to say, "Who touched Me?" that is recorded. Now it was happening all the time. Why would He stop at this particular time and say, "Who touched Me?" when this was a common occurrence? And when Jarius was so desperate, his daughter was so close to death. The reason why Jesus stopped is He knew that the daughter had died already. And He knew that soon those messengers were going to be there telling Jarius,

Thy daughter is dead (Mar 5:35); And Jesus had compassion on Jarius because of the grief and all that he was going to receive when he heard news that his daughter was dead. And he was seeking, really, to give to Jarius a ray of hope even in the midst of the bad news. So, while Jesus was saying to the woman, "Be thou whole of your plague," Jarius was seeing the power of Christ manifested just by someone touching Him and being healed of a condition that existed for twelve years, that same amount of time that he enjoyed the beauty and glow of his little daughter. As Jarius turned from those who brought the message to Jesus and probably said, "Lord, it's too late, never mind," Jesus just said to him,

Be not afraid, only believe (Mar 5:36).

He had given him a basis for his belief. He had given him courage in the darkest hour. Surely as Jarius turned, it must be that the blood had drained out of his face and he was probably an ashen white and just had that sad desperate, "Oh, God, it's too late. My daughter's gone." And he just had that grief, hopelessness. He had been hoping that Jesus might get there just to touch her. "I know that if He'll lay His hand on her, she'll be healed. Now, it's too late. My little girl is gone." But Jesus just said to him, "Don't be afraid, only believe."

And at this point Jesus stopped the crowd and said, "That's it. Don't go any further; you stay here. I'll be back." And He took Peter and James and John and the father, and they journeyed together, probably in order that they might get there more quickly. Because it's awfully slow moving with a huge crowd of people, trying to work your way through the crowd. So, they stopped them in order that they might come with haste to the house.

And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly (Mar 5:38).

It was a custom in those days to really show your great love for the deceased by wailing loudly for them, and the louder the wails, the more it expressed your grief and love for the one who was deceased. And so, they had professional wailers, people who were especially skilled in wailing. And they would hire them to come and to wail on these occasions, in order that the whole neighborhood might know the grief that you are feeling in this hour of loss. And so, many times when a person was dying, the wailers would assemble so that at the moment of death they could let out the cries and the wails, which were as an announcement to the neighborhood and all of the tragedy that had befallen the family. And so, there was the tumult, great weeping and wailing as they approached the house.

And when he was come in, he [Jesus] saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? [What's all the big fuss about, and why are you weeping?] the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. [And their wails turned to laughter of scorn.] And they laughed him to scorn. But when he put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, [that is Peter, James and John,] and entereth in where the damsel was lying. And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi (Mar 5:39-41);

That's Aramaic, and because it is Aramaic, it was probably the household language, the language used around the house. Jesus probably generally spoke in Greek, but the household language was Aramaic. And that is why Mark says,

which is, being interpreted, Damsel, (I say unto thee,) arise (Mar 5:41).

More literally, the Aramaic, "Talitha, cumi," is "My little lamb, arise." Jesus was speaking to this little girl in extremely endearing terms. Looking at this little form of the twelve year old daughter of Jarius that was lying there still in death, He said, "My little lamb, arise."

And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment. And he charged them straitly that no man should know it; and commanded that something should be given her to eat (Mar 5:42-43).

The question arises, why would Jesus bring this little girl back into a world of strife and misery and woe? Surely being with the Father in heaven would be much better than to be in this world with all of its heartache and all of its pain and all of its suffering. Why would the Lord call her back into this world? Only because of His compassion for the parents' grief. It was for their sake, not her sake, that He did it. It was because of His compassion upon the great grief that they were feeling that He brought the little girl back to life. For her sake, He would have left her in the kingdom, away from the strife and the turmoil and the ache and all of this world. But for their sake, He brought her back.

Next week, we'll start with chapter 6. It's a long chapter, so we dare not try to get started with that tonight.

May the Lord be with you and bless you, give you a good week. And may you begin to see fruit from the seed that has been sown in your heart, as God begins to take the word and use it just as a life-changing power. And may the word of Christ dwell in your hearts richly by faith. And may the Lord touch your life with His touch of love and strength. In Jesus' name.



Mark 6:1-56 (AMP)

1 JESUS WENT away from there and came to His [own] country and hometown [Nazareth], and His disciples followed [with] Him. 2 And on the Sabbath He began to teach in the synagogue; and many who listened to Him were utterly astonished, saying, Where did this Man acquire all this? What is the wisdom [the broad and full intelligence which has been] given to Him? What mighty works and exhibitions of power are wrought by His hands! 3 Is not this the Carpenter, the son of Mary and the brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not His sisters here among us? And they took offense at Him and were hurt [that is, they disapproved of Him, and it hindered them from acknowledging His authority] and they were caused to stumble and fall. 4 But Jesus said to them, A prophet is not without honor (deference, reverence) except in his [own] country and among [his] relatives and in his [own] house. 5 And He was not able to do even one work of power there, except that He laid His hands on a few sickly people [and] cured them. 6 And He marveled because of their unbelief (their lack of faith in Him). And He went about among the surrounding villages and continued teaching. 7 And He called to Him the Twelve [apostles] and began to send them out [as His ambassadors] two by two and gave them authority and power over the unclean spirits. 8 He charged them to take nothing for their journey except a walking stick—no bread, no wallet for a collection bag, no money in their belts (girdles, purses)— 9 But to go with sandals on their feet and not to put on two tunics (undergarments). 10 And He told them, Wherever you go into a house, stay there until you leave that place. 11 And if any community will not receive and accept and welcome you, and they refuse to listen to you, when you depart, shake off the dust that is on your feet, for a testimony against them. Truly I tell you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the judgment day than for that town. 12 So they went out and preached that men should repent [that they should change their minds for the better and heartily amend their ways, with abhorrence of their past sins]. 13 And they drove out many unclean spirits and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them. 14 King Herod heard of it, for [Jesus'] name had become well known. He and they [of his court] said, John the Baptist has been raised from the dead; that is why these mighty powers [of performing miracles] are at work in Him. 15 [But] others kept saying, It is Elijah! And others said, It is a prophet, like one of the prophets [of old]. 16 But when Herod heard [of it], he said, [This very] John, whom I beheaded, has been raised [from the dead]. 17 For [this] Herod himself had sent and seized John and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because he [Herod] had married her. 18 For John had told Herod, It is not lawful and you have no right to have your brother's wife. 19 And Herodias was angry (enraged) with him and held a grudge against him and wanted to kill him; but she could not, 20 For Herod had [a reverential] fear of John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and [continually] kept him safe [under guard]. When he heard, he was much perplexed; and [yet] he heard him gladly. 21 But an opportune time came [for Herodias] when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his nobles and the high military commanders and chief men of Galilee. 22 For when the daughter of Herodias herself came in and danced, she pleased and fascinated Herod and his guests; and the king said to the girl, Ask me for whatever you desire, and I will give it to you. 23 And he put himself under oath to her, Whatever you ask me, I will give it to you, even to the half of my kingdom. 24 Then she left the room and said to her mother, What shall I ask for [myself]? And she replied, The head of John the Baptist! 25 And she rushed back instantly to the king and requested, saying, I wish you to give me right now the head of John the Baptist on a platter. 26 And the king was deeply pained and grieved and exceedingly sorry, but because of his oaths and his guests, he did not want to slight her [by breaking faith with her]. 27 And immediately the king sent off one [of the soldiers] of his bodyguard and gave him orders to bring [John's] head. He went and beheaded him in the prison 28 And brought his head on a platter and handed it to the girl, and the girl gave it to her mother. 29 When his disciples learned of it, they came and took [John's] body and laid it in a tomb. 30 The apostles [sent out as missionaries] came back and gathered together to Jesus, and told Him all that they had done and taught. 31 And He said to them, [As for you] come away by yourselves to a deserted place, and rest a while—for many were [continually] coming and going, and they had not even leisure enough to eat. 32 And they went away in a boat to a solitary place by themselves. 33 Now many [people] saw them going and recognized them, and they ran there on foot from all the surrounding towns, and they got there ahead [of those in the boat]. 34 As Jesus landed, He saw a great crowd waiting, and He was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and He began to teach them many things. 35 And when the day was already far gone, His disciples came to Him and said, This is a desolate and isolated place, and the hour is now late. 36 Send the crowds away to go into the country and villages round about and buy themselves something to eat. 37 But He replied to them, Give them something to eat yourselves. And they said to Him, Shall we go and buy 200 denarii [about forty dollars] worth of bread and give it to them to eat? 38 And He said to them, How many loaves do you have? Go and see. And when they [had looked and] knew, they said, Five [loaves] and two fish. 39 Then He commanded the people all to recline on

the green grass by companies. 40 So they threw themselves down in ranks of hundreds and fifties [with the regularity of an arrangement of beds of herbs, looking like so many garden plots]. 41 And taking the five loaves and two fish, He looked up to heaven and, praising God, gave thanks and broke the loaves and kept on giving them to the disciples to set before the people; and He [also] divided the two fish among [them] all. 42 And they all ate and were satisfied. 43 And they took up twelve [small hand] baskets full of broken pieces [from the loaves] and of the fish. 44 And those who ate the loaves were 5,000 men. 45 And at once He insisted that the disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him to the other side to Bethsaida, while He was sending the throng away. 46 And after He had taken leave of them, He went off into the hills to pray. 47 Now when evening had come, the boat was out in the middle of the lake, and He was by Himself on the land. 48 And having seen that they were troubled and tormented in [their] rowing, for the wind was against them, about the fourth watch of the night [between 3:00-6:00 a.m.] He came to them, walking [directly] on the sea. And He acted as if He meant to pass by them, 49 But when they saw Him walking on the sea they thought it was a ghost, and raised a [deep, throaty] shriek of terror. 50 For they all saw Him and were agitated (troubled and filled with fear and dread). But immediately He talked with them and said, Take heart! I AM! Stop being alarmed and afraid. 51 And He went up into the boat with them, and the wind ceased (sank to rest as if exhausted by its own beating). And they were astonished exceedingly [beyond measure], 52 For they failed to consider or understand [the teaching and meaning of the miracle of] the loaves; [in fact] their hearts had grown callous [had become dull and had lost the power of understanding]. 53 And when they had crossed over, they reached the land of Gennesaret and came to [anchor at] the shore. 54 As soon as they got out of the boat, [the people] recognized Him, 55 And they ran about the whole countryside, and began to carry around sick people on their sleeping pads or mats to any place where they heard that He was. 56 And wherever He came into villages or cities or the country, they would lay the sick in the marketplaces and beg Him that they might touch even the fringe of His outer garment, and as many as touched Him were restored to health.

Shall we turn to Mark's gospel, chapter 6.

Jesus had been in the city of Capernaum there on the northern part of the Sea of Galilee. And He has just brought back to life the daughter of Jairus, one of the rulers of the synagogue there in Capernaum. Now He is leaving Capernaum and with His disciples He is returning back to His hometown of Nazareth. It's probably thirty to thirty-five, well maybe forty miles from Capernaum to Nazareth.

And he went from thence (Mar 6:1),

The thence would be Capernaum, the Sea of Galilee.

and came into his own country (Mar 6:1);

That is, His hometown of Nazareth.

and his disciples follow him. And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? (Mar 6:1-2)

So, they were astonished, or the word in Greek is scandalon. They were stumbled by Him because they knew Him. And they said, "Where did He get all of this?"

Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary (Mar 6:3),

The fact that He is referred to as the son of Mary would indicate that Joseph was already dead. Chances are that Joseph died rather early and that Jesus stayed at home until He was thirty years old in order to provide for the family. At the death of His father, He would have had to have been the family provider. Now, this word carpenter is in the Greek, an artificer. Actually, He was the kind of fellow that, no matter what you needed done, was just a handyman. He could make anything from scratch. So, anything from building a little shed to building a house, He was just one of those men skilled with His hands and was capable of doing just about anything. And He no doubt remained at home until the rest of His younger brothers and sisters were able to be out on their own. And so, they said,

Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him (Mar 6:3).

Scandalized, that would be a transliteration of the Greek word scandalon. He was a stumbling stone. It means a stumbling stone. They were stumbled at Him because they knew Him.

But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honor, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house (Mar 6:4).

So there's an implication there that even His own brothers, His own kin did not really honor Him, His own house. But He's not without honor; He goes elsewhere to get honor. But in His own country they don't recognize Him; they refuse to recognize Him because they know Him. And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marveled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching (Mar 6:5-6). He didn't do many marvelous works there in Nazareth simply because of the unbelief. The unbelief kept them from coming. Had they come, surely they could have been healed. But He just laid His hands upon a few of the sick folk, but there wasn't any marvelous miracles wrought there in Nazareth as there had been around the Sea of Galilee. "And He went around the villages there teaching."

And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits; and commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only [only their walking stick]; no scrip [but they were not to take any scrip], no bread, no money in their purse: but [they were to] be shod with sandals; and not put on [but they were not to take] two coats [two outer garments]. And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into a house, there abide till ye depart from that place. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence [from there], shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city (Mar 6:7-11).

Notice, the Lord does speak of degrees of judgment that will come upon people. Some people are concerned that all people receive the same punishment. Not so. Jesus said, "If a person knows the will of God and does not according to it and is doing evil, he will be beaten with many stripes. Yet, a person who has done things that really deserve or are worthy of many stripes because he did not know the will of the Father, will be beaten with few stripes. For unto whom much is given, much is required; to whom little is given, little is required." Now, He is saying that it's going to be more tolerable for the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah in that day of judgment. Earlier He had said that the men of Sodom will arise with this generation and will condemn it. Or the men of Nineveh, rather, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, "Behold, the greater than Jonah is here!" So, there will be degrees of judgment, punishment meted out by God. And we don't know the final disposition that God will be making of the sinful people. There is not enough given to us in scripture to form hard, fast kind of judgments ourselves. That's in God's hand. I don't know what God will do with that person who has never had the opportunity of knowing Jesus Christ or even hearing about Jesus Christ. I don't know what God will do to them. The Bible isn't specific in that area. I know it will be much easier on him than it will be on you if you have heard the gospel and reject it. So, rather than being so worried about him, you better start worrying about yourself. You see, you're responsible for what you know. And he who knows the will of the Father and yet does not accordingly, that's the fellow that's in big trouble. And so, just what judgment and by what measure God is going to mete out, that's something that He has reserved to Himself. And I'm glad for that.

There's one occupation I would never want, and that is that of a judge. I just could not face that awesome responsibility of determining the sentences that should be meted out to men. You know, to determine whether or not a fellow is innocent or guilty, or the degree of guilty. That's just something I really would never want to have to do. And I thank God I don't have to.

So there will be degrees. More tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah than for that city that rejected the disciples as they went out to witness for Him. And they went out, and preached that men should repent (Mar 6:12). The same message that John the Baptist preached, "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand." Change, turn. And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them (Mar 6:13).

Now, in the epistle of James, he said, "Is there any sick among you? Let them call for the elders of the church, and let them anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord shall raise them up" (James 5:14-15). Now, there are some Bible expositors who say that this word anoint is literally to massage. I don't know. The Bible scholars say a lot of things I really don't know about. If it were to massage, then it would seem to indicate that there was some kind of a healing process through the massaging with oil. That, I can't believe. I believe that the anointing with oil was purely a symbolic act.

As last week we were sharing with you, the importance of having a point of contact for releasing faith. And how the woman coming through the crowd said, "If I can just but grasp onto His garment, I know that I will be healed." And when she grasped His garment, immediately she felt in her body that she was healed. And Jesus stopped and said, "Who touched Me?" It was a point of contact where she released her faith and was healed. Faith was no longer just a passive thing to her; it became active, it was released. It wasn't, "I know the Lord can, oh, I'm sure He's able," but, "I know He is now." And it's that "now" activating a faith. I believe that the anointing of oil has this very same value. It is a symbolic act; the oil is scripturally symbolic of the Holy Spirit. And so we as a church do practice anointing with oil. Not massaging, just anointing with oil in the name of the Lord; and the oil, being the symbol of the Holy Spirit. So on Saturday night, the elders gather and if there are any sick within the church, and you would like to have prayer by the elders of the church, you can come on Saturday evening to the library room. And there they minister to those that are sick, anointing with oil, praying for them. And the Lord is faithful and God has touched. And there have been many marvelous healings and miracles wrought through prayer there in the Saturday night prayer service. It's not something that we make a big deal over. I don't think God's word makes that big a deal over it. We don't try to glorify any individual through this prayer. We feel that the benefit of having the elders pray for you is that no person is singled out for glory; only the Lord is singled out for glory. So there isn't the developing of some personality cult where "brother so-and-so laid his hands on me." But, we would rather you to know that the Lord wants to lay His hand upon you. And He is so good; He uses such as us as His instruments, that through us He might do His work.

And so the disciples, as they went out, were anointing with oil. This is the first reference to it, and the only reference within the gospel. And the only other reference I know is in James where he just says, "If there's any sick among you, let him call for the elders of the church." We'll get to James, maybe, if the Lord tarries. Many that were sick were thus healed. And King Herod heard of him [Jesus]; (for his name was spread abroad;) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him. [But] others said, That it is Elias [Elijah]. And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets. But when Herod heard thereof, he said, It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead (Mar 6:14-16). Herod, no doubt, had a guilty conscience concerning John. This family of Herod had to be one of the most messed up families in history. It is so messed up that I would try and explain to you how messed up it is, but I'd probably get messed up trying to explain it. But this is Herod Antipas. He was the son of Herod the Great. Herod the Great was the one who was the Herod at the time of the birth of Jesus. He was the one to whom the wise men came and inquired of where the Messiah was to be born. He was the one who said, "Go search diligently for the young child. When you've found Him, come and let me know that I may come and worship Him." He was the one that ordered all of the babies in the area of Bethlehem to be killed who were two years old and under. He was paranoid; he was always fearful that someone was going to try and kill him and take the throne.

Part of his paranoia was probably the result of the fact that he was such a little runt. He was about four feet, nine inches tall. And being a little man, he had great ambitions. And whenever he would build something, he would build it out of huge stones. The Western Wall of Jerusalem today is a testimony to the building prowess of this fellow Herod, these huge stones that make up the wall that was the retaining wall for the temple mount. The Herodian, out near Bethlehem and then the Masada, down near the Dead Sea; other tremendous building monuments that were done by Herod known as Herod the Great.

But because he was so paranoid, he married his first wife Doris who had a son, and he killed them both, that is Doris and the son. Then he married another woman named Miriam and she had two sons. Now, one of these two sons had a daughter named Herodias. Then, Herod got paranoid about Miriam and the two sons; he thought they were plotting against him, and so he put her to death and the two sons. And then he missed her after she was dead, and he began to mourn for her. And so, he built a tower and all there in Jerusalem as a monument to Miriam because he missed her so much. At this point, a saying developed, "It's safer to be Herod's pig than to be his son." Because at this point he had wiped out both wives and all of their children. He sort of cooled down from this point onwards. He married another gal by the name of Miriam, had a son by the name of Herod Philip, who moved to Rome and was just a wealthy merchantman. But Herod Philip married his niece, Herodias, who was the daughter of the assassinated brother, who was a half-brother to Herod Philip. So, she was his wife and his niece all at the same time. Now, Herod married another gal and she had a couple of sons, of which one was Herod Antipas. This is the Herod in our story. Herod Antipas was the ruler over a portion of the kingdom that his father Herod the Great had ruled over. Over the area up in the Galilee region.

Now, Herod Antipas went to Rome and visited his half-brother, Herod Philip. Now, Herod Philip and Herodias, his niece, had a daughter that they named Solomane. And Herod Antipas, when he was in Rome visiting his brother, fell in love with Herodias, his brother's wife who was also his niece, and talked her into leaving his brother, her husband, and marry him and return and reign with him in Galilee. Now, John the Baptist was a straight shooter. And John the Baptist spoke out against this unlawful action by Herod Antipas. And so, we read,

For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife; for he had married her. For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife (Mar 6:17-18).

Now, Herod, he liked to listen to John; though he didn't obey, he liked to listen to this guy. He was fascinated by John. But Herodias had it in for him. She was a very ambitious woman, scheming. Finally, she talked Herod Antipas to go to Rome and they, both of them, went to Rome together to ask the emperor to give him the title of king. The emperor of Rome, rather than giving him the title of king, banished him to gall. And that's the end of Herod Antipas and the history of him. But, at this point, Herodias was really upset, because John had spoken out against their marriage, saying, "It isn't lawful for you to have your brother's wife."

Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him (Mar 6:19);

She was so angry she would have killed him in the quarrel. John was just laying it on straight to her, and they were quarreling. She became angry, and had she been able to, she would have killed him. She was so angry with him.

but she could not: For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and holy, and observed him [he listened to him]; and when he heard him, he did many things, and he heard him gladly (Mar 6:19-20).

He liked listening, but it was some sort of a strange thing where a person likes to hear you, but yet, they don't follow it.

And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, [and] high captains, and [those] chief estates of Galilee; and when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee (Mar 6:21-22).

Now, the solo dances by women in those days were very sensual and usually done only by prostitutes. And of course, the whole purpose was the inflaming of the passions. And that Herodias would allow her daughter to perform such a dance before these men show of what low moral character she was. She was a woman without morals, allowing her daughter to go before these men with this sensual dance. Herod, being aroused by the dance, pleased, he said unto her, "Ask me whatever you want and I will give it to you."

And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give thee, unto the half of my kingdom (Mar 6:23).

It must have been quite a dance.

And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist. And she came in straightway [immediately] with haste unto the king, and [she] asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by [immediately] in a charger the head of John the Baptist. And the king was exceeding sorry; yet for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which [of those that] sat with him, he would not reject her (Mar 6:24-26).

He had put himself in a corner, and because of the oath and the fact that it was done in front of these fellows he couldn't back down. Pride wouldn't let him. And so, he did that unlawful murderous thing, adding sin to sin, compounding the situation. and he went and beheaded him in the prison, and brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel; and the damsel gave it to her mother. And when the disciples heard of it, they came and took up the corpse, and laid it in a tomb [buried it] (Mar 6:27-29). Now, Herod, no doubt, had a guilty conscience over this that lasted. So later on when he heard the fame of Jesus, heard the miracles of Jesus, he heard of Him, "There's a fellow there doing all kinds of miracles." He said, "It's John the Baptist; he's come back from the dead." It was a haunting guilt of his deed. He couldn't get John out of his mind. Perhaps he was even comforted by the thought that it

must be John the Baptist come back from the dead, because he knew that what he had done was wrong. And that's the end of that particular segment of the story. Now we come back. "Meanwhile, back at the ranch..." Jesus had sent his apostles out to minister. And now, they come back from this preaching mission. And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and [they] told him all [of the] things, both what they had done, and what they had taught (Mar 6:30). They were sharing with Him the marvelous meetings, the conversions, the healings, the power, the glory of their experience of going out in His name and preaching His gospel. Having received their reports, And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and [let's] rest a while: for there were [so] many [people who were] coming and going, and they had no leisure [time], so much as to eat [not even enough time to sit down and eat] (Mar 6:31).

Now, they have enough time to grab something as you're going by the table, but in those days eating was a big ceremony. You sat down and you really made a big deal out of eating. And they didn't have any time for that. They were being too pressured by the crowd. So, Jesus, seeing the pressure, the weariness, invited them to go over to the other side of the lake where it was more of a deserted area that they might just rest. It probably sounded great to the disciples.

And they departed into a desert place by ship privately. And the people saw them departing, and many knew him [They knew who it was], and [so they] ran afoot thither out of all cities, and outwent them (Mar 6:32-33). Now, Capernaum is at the northern end of the Sea of Galilee. It's only about six miles wide; you can see all the way across the Sea. And so, it was easy for them to watch the direction the little boat was going. And so, they just ran around the upper end of the island. And as they passed through Bethsaida, Koraisan and those cities, people no doubt questioned them where they were going. You know, if you see someone running and you think, "Well, what's going on?" You see a group of people running and you say, "Hey, what's happening?" "Oh, Jesus is going to be landing over here on the other side." "Oh, alright." And so, a big group of people joined them out of each of the cities. Until finally, when Jesus landed with his disciples, there were at least five thousand men beside the women and children that were waiting for the little boat to dock. At this point, I can imagine that the disciples were rather irritated with the inconsiderate nature of the people. "You know, don't you realize that we're needing rest, we want rest, we need to get away? We want to relax." And you're tired, easy to get irritated. And I'm sure that the disciples were irritated with this crowd.

And Jesus . . . was moved with compassion toward them (Mar 6:34), Rather than being irritated, it touched Him; it touched His heart. "Oh, these blessed people, so hungry for God, a real experience with God." And He was moved with compassion, because He looked at them in an entirely different light. Whereas the disciples were perhaps looking at them as a nuisance, Jesus saw them as poor little sheep without a shepherd. They don't know where they're going; they're lost. They have no defense. because they were as sheep not having a shepherd [but He saw them as sheep without a shepherd] (Mar 6:34): And because He had the heart of a shepherd, it touched Him; it moved Him.

and he began to teach them many things. And when the day was now far spent [getting evening], his disciples came unto him [with a problem], and said, [Look,] This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed [it's getting late], [Lord: you better] send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat. He answered and said unto them, give ye them to eat [Well, give them something to eat]. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat? [What do you mean? You want us to go into town and try and buy five thousand dollars worth of bread, so we can feed these people?] He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see.[Well, how much bread do you have? Go out and check.] And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes. [So, they went out and checked and they came back, and they said, "Well, there's a little kid here that has five loaves and two fish. That's all we've got."] And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass. And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and fifties. And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all. And they did all eat, and were filled. (Mar 6:34-42).

That particular Greek word translated filled would be better translated gluttoned, literally translated gluttoned. "They all ate and were gluttoned." I mean, they ate until they couldn't eat any more. And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes. And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men (Mar 6:43-44). So, the first of the two recorded incidences where Jesus miraculously fed the multitude with just a few loaves of bread. Here, five thousand men beside women and children, probably ten to fifteen thousand people being fed by five little sandwich loaves and two little fish. But then, collecting, that's the interesting thing, collecting twelve baskets full of the fragments after everyone was gluttoned.

And straightway [immediately] he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people. And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray (Mar 6:45-46). A busy day. You try to escape for rest. You arrive on the shore and there's ten thousand people waiting for you. And so you give of yourself until it's late in the evening, and then you perform the miracle. Now you must really be ready for that rest. He ordered His disciples to get into the ship and to head back over to the other side, passing by Bethsaida to get on over, while He Himself sent away the multitude of people. But then, you need rest. And how did He find His rest? He departed into a mountain to pray. He found strength always through prayer. It was a place of rest and a place of strengthening. Oh, that we would learn the strength of prayer. Again, one of the greatest encouragements to pray or the greatest display of our need for prayer is the fact that Jesus prayed. Now, if He felt prayer was such an essential part of His own life, being who He was, how much more essential is prayer to us? If He felt that He could not get along without it, how in the world do you think you can get by without it? Prayer surely is one of the most neglected spiritual functions in the body of Christ. It's something that you need to seriously consider. I am certain that the world would be much better off today if there were more people praying. Our lives would be much better off if we prayed more. God help us. There's tremendous power that has been made available to each of us, but we must take advantage of it through prayer. And when even was come [it was now night], the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he [was] alone on the land. And he saw them toiling in rowing (Mar 6:47-48); I told you see the Sea of Galilee is not very wide at that point.

It is possible that it was a full moon night. If so, on a full moon you can see across the sea and everything that's on the sea. That full moon is so bright over there you can't believe it. And you could see them as the moon, of course, was reflecting across the water. for the wind was contrary unto them [a wind had come up and it was against them] (Mar 6:48): But they were rowing. Now, I like this, because they were in this position because Jesus had commanded them to get in the ship and go. Obeying the command of Christ, they were actually being put in a position of strain. You who think that by following the will of the Lord everything is going to be just so rosy, peaches and cream, you've got another thing coming. Jesus ordered them to go across the sea against the wind, against the storm. He put them in this position of toil and strain, and they were already weary and tired. But I love their dogged obedience.

Now, it would have been a lot easier for them to just turn the boat around and row with the thing on back, you know. "Why try and fight this, you know?" Because you're rowing and you're not going anywhere, you know. Here's the candlelight of Bethsaida off to the right side and, I guess if you're going backwards it'd be off to your left side. But, you know, you're rowing and the lights are still in the same place after an hour. "Oh, no. But Jesus told us to go." And they were in this condition because they were obeying the command of the Lord. I love it. And the Lord sat there watching them. He saw them toiling in rowing, the wind was contrary. Now, and about the fourth watch of the night (Mar 6:48) I mean, He really let them go at it for a while, because the fourth watch of the night begins at 3:00 in the morning. The fourth watch is from 3:00 in the morning to 6:00 in the morning. So I mean, these guys had really been going at it, and Jesus just sitting there watching them. "Lord, it's not fair." And about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them [acted like he was just going to walk right past them] (Mar 6:48).

Someone asked me if I thought that Jesus ever laughed. I think He has a tremendous sense of humor. You know, they're toiling, they're rowing and all, and He comes walking across the sea; you know, just like He doesn't see them, like He's walking right past them.

But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out [thought it's got to be a ghost, and they started crying out in fear]: for they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid. And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and [they] wondered. For they considered not the miracle of the loaves [feeding of the five thousand with just the five loaves and two fish]; for their heart was hardened (Mar 6:49-52).

It was just, they saw it, but they didn't. And when they had passed over, they came into the land of Gennesaret, and drew [near] to shore (Mar 6:53). So, they didn't go to Capernaum, but actually a little south from Capernaum to the area of Gennesaret, which is near the little area of Magdala from which Mary Magdalene came. Now, you that have been to Israel have the advantage of being able to picture all of this in your mind. And they came into the land of Gennesaret, and drew to the shore. And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they knew him [as soon as they got out of the boat, the people recognized him], and ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard he was. And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought [they begged] him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole (Mar 6:53-56).

So that woman who had first touched the Lord sort of opened up an area where many people then came to the place of releasing their faith by touching Him. "And as many as touched were made whole."

(Through The Bible c 2000 Series; Chuck Smith; Bible commentaries,1979-1986)

The Lord bless you and watch, guard, and keep you;

The Lord make His face to shine upon and enlighten you and be gracious to you;

The Lord lift up His {approving} countenance upon you and give you peace. Amen.

Numbers 6:24-26

(Amplified Bible; Joyce Meyers; 2006; Faith Words; Scripture; Commentaries; pages 1399-1402)

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