

Theme: What Does this Text REVEAL About Jesus? – His Purpose

Mark 1:35-39 (NKJV)

³⁵ Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed. ³⁶ And Simon and those who were with Him searched for Him. ³⁷ When they found Him, they said to Him, "Everyone is looking for You." ³⁸ But He said to them, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth." ³⁹ And He was preaching in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and casting out demons.

What did Jesus come to do? Obviously He did lots of things during His time here on this earth, but if you had to boil it down to one thing, what would you say it was? As we continue to look at various Gospel texts during this season of Epiphany and consider the various things they **reveal** about Jesus, we come to a text from the Gospel of Mark in which Jesus says, **"for this purpose I have come forth" (Mark 1:38)**. What was that **"purpose?"** We pray that the Holy Spirit would bless our study today as we seek to answer that question and learn what other things this text **reveals** about Jesus.

The first thing our text **reveals** about Jesus is very instructive and is an excellent example for us to follow:

1) It REVEALS that Jesus prayed.

He didn't just rattle off a quick table prayer before a meal either. No, listen again to the first verse of our text, **"Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed" (v. 35)**. In this verse and in other examples from the Gospels we see that Jesus had a very deep and full prayer life. In fact, we're told in the Gospel of Luke that before He chose His twelve apostles, **"He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God" (Luke 6:12)**. Notice from this verse that Jesus got up early (**"a long while before daylight"**) and went off by Himself to a quiet **"solitary place"** to commune with His Heavenly Father in prayer. Think about how incredible that is, but also how instructive that is for us: If Jesus, true God, but also true man, felt the need to spend quiet, focused time in prayer with His Heavenly Father, how much more should we?

The second thing this text, and our Gospel reading that came before it **reveals** about Jesus is:

2) It REVEALS that Jesus is powerful!

Our Gospel reading reminded us of Jesus' power to heal both physically and spiritually. He healed Peter's mother-in-law from her fever (**Mark 1:31**), and we're told, **"At evening, when the sun had set, they brought to Him all who were sick and those who were demon-possessed. ³³ And the whole city was gathered together at the door. ³⁴ Then He healed many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and He did not allow the demons to speak, because they knew Him" (Mark 1:32-34)**.

Do we sometimes forget just how absolute Jesus' power is? It is good for us to read these texts once again to **reveal** to our hearts and minds—perhaps *remind* is a better way to put it—that Jesus *is* **powerful**. He is almighty! He has all power and authority in heaven and on earth (**Matthew 28:18**). He has power over the natural world and over the supernatural world—including the devil and his minions. And it's not even close! When the whole city showed up for healing, He not only healed their physical illnesses and diseases, He also **"cast out many demons" (v. 34)** and showed His absolute power and authority over them, not even allowing them to speak (**v. 34b**).

And yet these examples of Jesus' power pale in comparison to the power Jesus **reveals** when He reminds us of His **purpose**. After all, knowing what Jesus' **purpose** was—what He came to this earth to do—is just as important as knowing *who* He is. Many people might know that Jesus was a historical figure, but they

really don't know *Who* He is, and certainly don't know Him by faith as their Lord and Savior. In the same way that it is necessary to know that Jesus was more than just a "good man," a "great teacher," a great "healer," or even a "god," it is also necessary to know that Jesus' **main purpose** in coming to this earth was not to physically heal or work miracles, not to lead a political or social revolution, not even just to show people how to love each other, or how to pray, or how to live a good life by His perfect example.

In our text we hear Jesus clearly state His **purpose** and then we see Him act and speak to accomplish that mission. In fact, all that Jesus is, all that He has said and done worked toward completing that mission. All the miracles, healings, teachings, and acts of love were not an end to themselves, but were done to help accomplish His **purpose**. Jesus said in v. 38, "...for this purpose I have come forth (v. 38b)." What was that purpose? We are told earlier in that verse that it was **"to preach"** (v. 38a).

And so, the third thing our text **reveals** about Jesus is:

3) It REVEALS, most importantly, that Jesus' purpose was to preach.

Not just to preach in general, but as our sermon from the Gospel of Matthew reminded us last week, He was **"preaching the gospel of the kingdom"** (Matthew 4:23). That means Jesus was preaching the "Good News" (Gospel) about Himself and how He had come to save mankind by His perfect life and His eventual sacrifice on the cross. At other times in His ministry Jesus clearly stated that this was His mission. Listen to a few other times Jesus spoke about His **purpose**:

- ✠ "...for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me." (John 18:37b)
- ✠ "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." (Mark 10:45)
- ✠ "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." (John 10:38)

As true God Himself, Jesus' **purpose** was of course the same as God, His Father's **purpose**. Jesus, as true man, prayed to God the Father, as we read in our text. Jesus sought His father's will and was devoted to *His* mission. Jesus Himself said in John's Gospel, "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me" (John 6:38). How did God the Father summarize His will? What is His **"purpose?"** The Bible tells us, **"God our Savior...desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth"** (1 Timothy 2:3-4). It was God's **purpose** from eternity to save mankind through His Son Jesus. He knew in advance that Satan would ruin His perfect creation; He sent Jesus to restore it. That was the reason for Jesus' *Epiphany*; His *"revealing,"* or appearance, as the Son of God on this earth. The Apostle John tells us, **"For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil"** (1 John 3:8b). That's exactly what we see Jesus doing in our text, isn't it? **"Destroy[ing] the works of the devil"** by preaching the truth of the Gospel of peace, forgiveness, and life against Satan, death, and hell: **"He was preaching in their synagogues throughout all Galilee;"** and, as our text tells us He was defeating Satan, by **"casting out demons"** (v. 39).

The fact that Jesus was completely devoted to His mission of mankind's salvation does not, of course, prove He was true God and God's Son—but the fact that He accomplished His mission exactly and completely as the Father intended certainly does! Jesus crushed Satan once and for all and destroyed sins power when He shed His blood—the very blood of the Son of God—by His death on the cross, and then defeated death itself by His victorious resurrection from the grave on the third day.

Jesus' **purpose** was accomplished, fully and completely. But He still is doing more saving work because there are more souls to be saved. Now don't get me wrong, His blood and His righteousness is enough—completely and totally enough—to cover all sins and make payment for the full salvation of all people. But not all have heard, and not all have believed. And so in that sense there is still more saving work to do; still more souls to save. He has given this work to us and all Christians. He has given us His powerful saving

word to preach and drive out Satan and has given each one of us a powerful “**purpose**” “**Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature**” (Mark 16:15).

Are we completely devoted to the **purpose** that Jesus has given us to share that salvation with others? Like Jesus did in our text we can set aside time alone for prayer with our heavenly Father and pray that “His will be done” and that His mission of saving souls would be accomplished among us and around the globe. Like Jesus we can “**preach the gospel of the kingdom [of God]**” (Matthew 4:23) to the many souls who are dying and in need of hearing this saving “Good News.” We may not be able to go from town to town preaching and teaching like Jesus, but we all have people around us—even among our own families and friends—who need to hear of Jesus’ love and need to see His love reflected in our lives. That means that we back up our words of love with compassionate actions of love, just like Jesus, who was healing people and casting out demons well into the night (Mark 1:32-34). At the very least, all of us can give of our offerings to help support those who are carrying out Christ’s mission. We know that there is a great need for these offerings here, locally; in our country, the United States; and overseas.

Telling of God’s saving love in Christ to others and then *showing* them His love in our lives, let that be our **purpose!** Where will we find the motivation, strength, and love to carry this out? By reading from Jesus’ powerful Word every day! His Word **reveals** to us, and reminds us of our **purpose**, “**For the love of Christ compels us, because we came to this conclusion: One died for all; therefore, all died.**”¹⁵ **And he died for all, so that those who live would no longer live for themselves but for him, who died in their place and was raised again**” (2 Corinthians 5:14-15 EHV). Amen.