



Lectionary Bible Study Our Savior Lutheran, Vero Beach

Epiphany 5B – Feb 7, 2021

Readings:

Isaiah 40:21-31, Psalm 147:1-11
1 Corinthians 9:16-23, Mark 1:29-39

Live Bible Studies Hosted on Zoom

Wednesdays @ 10:00 AM

More Info & Link at

www.OurSaviorELCA.com/BibleStudy

Mark 1:29-39 (NRSV)

²⁹ As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ³⁰ Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. ³¹ He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

³² That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. ³³ And the whole city was gathered around the door. ³⁴ And he cured many who were sick with various diseases and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

³⁵ In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. ³⁶ And Simon and his companions hunted for him. ³⁷ When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." ³⁸ He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." ³⁹ And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

The fact that Simon's mother-in-law is living in her daughter's home suggests she has no husband or sons to care for her. Her healing is accomplished with a gesture - a personal touch. The visible sign of her healing is that she is able to return to her customary role.

1. *Think about the importance of touch in this healing of Simon's mother-in-law. Are there other stories in scripture that the touch of Jesus brings significance?*
2. *What do you make of Simon's mother-in-law beginning to serve as soon as the fever left her? Who did she serve?*

At sundown, sick people and those possessed with demons are brought into the house. Mark suggests the whole city gathers around the door. Words out.

3. *What reputation do you think is building concerning Jesus?*
4. *Do you think all those who came to be healed wanted to be disciples of Jesus or wanted to serve with the same servant attitude as Simon's mother-in-law?*
5. *Did Jesus heal all those who came?*
6. *Why do you think after healing many and casting out many demons Jesus "would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him?"*

The next day, Jesus gets up before dark and goes to a deserted place for prayer. Interestingly, Jesus' followers then (as too often now,) are not praying, rather they are busy worrying about immediate needs, hoping that Jesus would return to those searching for him. They find Jesus, but Jesus tells them returning to meet yet unmet needs or demands of local group is not "*what I came to do.*"

7. *What do you make of Jesus' statement? Is Jesus early on saying something about his priorities?*

Given the existing cultural norm of total loyalty to one's one kin and then village, this response by Jesus would have been experienced as a profound betrayal. This likely would have resulted in damaging gossip that would tarnish Jesus' reputation, one that would have been better served had he stayed and healed everyone. His followers would have been shocked by this response.

It has been suggested that verses 38 and 39 proved a snapshot of leadership:

- Staying with the mission;
- Not getting distracted by worthy, but not mission-related needs;
- Paying the price of disappointing some (and their subsequent gossip and criticisms) in order to serve the central mission.

8. *As you think about Christ's mission, where do you see the Church of Christ today succeeding and failing in its priorities?*