

PRAISE INTERNATIONAL
JESUS FIXING OR FORMING

MARK 1:29-39

Good Morning

Prayer Needs - Palm Sunday Offering

I was not quit 16 working on the farm normally 20-30 hours a week while in school when my Dad surprised both my brother and I by purchasing two non functioning pick up trucks - one for me and one for my brother Paul as a sort of payment for our work. Our job would be to help out older brother fix the truck - Paul choose the 62 Chevy and I got the 64 Ford - that had an IH bed attached. Paul being older and already driving got his fixed and painted. Then it was my turn to help my brother get the old straight six running with a 3 speed on the column (no seat belts - no kidding!). After it ran we turned to the body - that bed that was obviously NOT a Ford bed....was the wrong size. Then my brother John got an idea...we move the bed back so it looks right on the tires - that left a 6 inch gap between the cab and bed - that would be a cool place to run the exhaust pipes up and make it look cool! So when it was done I had a banana yellow truck with white exhaust pipes running behind the bed....by this time I had my drivers license and I could drag main street - oh yea!

Long before Tracy Chapman's song...I was living the lyric:

You got a fast car

City lights lay out before us

And I had a feeling that I belonged

I had a feeling I could be someone, be someone, be someone

Only problem was that no matter how cool my truck made me feel - it couldn't fix what was going on inside me. By then my body was already revealing how life was affecting the deeper parts me - diagnosed with Ulcerated Colitis - yes its an autoimmune illness but its onset more than likely connected to watching my mothers body slowly give way to terminal cancer. Add to this a father whose passionate conviction was that my mom could (dare I say should) be healed of this sickness - little room was left to 'talk about the obvious' lest we give way to unbelief. And it all felt so alone. I got a 'fast car' but it could be said we as a family were all looking for a 'fast car' to fix what was tearing us up.

Looking for the fix...wait isn't that how we often give context to our faith?

Curiously saying something very similar Simon asks Jesus in our text;

"Everybody wants to know where You are!"

Simon is saying what everyone is thinking;

Jesus you aren't present to what seems obvious - if You can fix it, and you can based on what I have seen, why are you in the dark and seemingly leaving us in the dark? Mark whose gospel moves very rapidly is already introducing this powerful tension - God has come! Yes!

But He isn't doing what we want or what we think He obviously should do!

To the people who are looking for something or someone to 'fix' their life - God comes to address some things that are deeper.

Has God come first to fix our suffering?

To get a 'fast car' out or to meet man in the depths of that suffering - to overcome death by death? 'Everyone is looking for You' to stay and fix the real suffering of our life. And in the

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closing scene of our text Jesus in the darkness says lets go somewhere else so I tell more people of the good news of the Kingdom.

Jesus seems to go out of His way to reveal the God who is not just about fixing suffering but the God who meets us in our suffering to proclaim you are not alone and to enable us to live differently in that place - and that beloved is good news.

In these verses that capture all the attention of Capernaum;

- Jesus reveals **life over death** Peters Mother in Law, **Silencing of the lies of hell, healing bodies and prayer** in the dark.... Yet everyone is looking for you Jesus.
- He does LESS than what they had hoped, **everyone is looking for more**, He even leaves some to brought later when He returns (**remember the man brought by his friends next chapter?**).

Leaves some questions

- Maybe Jesus arrival was not to simply reveal His power to heal and deliver?
- Maybe He is looking to something else?
- What if His main point is something other than healing and deliverance but something much deeper in the regions of the heart.

What if His message is main point? To be formed in the image of Christ – to become – human.

As I look at my life **I hear my voice with Simon so many times...Jesus everyone is looking for...**

- To make everything OK! To get things back to ‘normal’, to make my life great again...
- Yet Messiah comes not just to get things to our normal but to reveal a new life!
- To restore the dream of the God head in Genesis 1.

Wait Jesus I want everything to be OK.

- Yet He said plainly to His friends follow me and it will actually be harder! It leads to a cross! But I know how to bring life in the face of death!
- I have come to reveal not a more comfortable version of your life - but the God who has come to meet you in your actual life!

Luke 4 - Gods Kingdom that silences the lie of hell that you are alone - freedom to the captive, sight to the blind, blessing to the poor and oppressed.

Mark's story in chapter one invites us to something deeper;

- What if Jesus did not come just to heal but to point to and reveal another Kingdom?
- And oh how easy we can get caught up in the draw to meetings and movements that seemingly ‘**fix**’ life - and dare I say almost a demand on God for things to go our way, almost like its a ‘right’ if I have believed and done the right things my life should go a certain way...
- That feels well more blessed, more secure - fixed.

And Jesus is inviting us to the cross to be ‘formed’ into the image of Christ.

- The miracles were intended to point them and us to another Kingdom!
- One where His presence is with us always, not just feed once but feed for eternity!

Lets just fast forward to the Mark 15:3 now people are inviting Jesus to ‘fix’ it again....

‘He rescued others, but He can’t rescue Himself...’

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- **Yet He is rescuing all of humanity....and ushering another Kingdom - on a cross.**

And this is exactly where we this passage gets uncomfortable....Jesus where is this going?

Father George Calcuti

1945 - was a Romanian Priest teaching young Romanians the ways to follow Jesus - as a result he is rounded up by the Soviets and sentenced to death.

Not for his actions but for teaching the idea of believing in another Kingdom other than the State.

He spends 21 years on death row and then is miraculously exiled to 'America' in Virginia for a minimum of 21 years.

When he was interviewed about his imprisonment for a biography about his life he described how he experienced **the deep presence of Christ IN his suffering**, whether it was an insect in his cell or a passing conversation with a guard all of these things were things he could be grateful for and find Christ's presence in - **he became deeply aware of Christ with him in all things.**

Before his death at 80 years old in 2006 he said this

"We are losing a generation of people because we and the world around us have said that what God mostly wants for us is to be happy. And we have left folks unprepared for the suffering that awaits them in every life - even good lives. And we have told them, that Jesus can be a useful accessory in our quest for getting perfect, privileged American lives. Jesus refuses to be an accessory to our own life-aggrandizement projects. Right? Jesus promised that we would suffer, that Christ came to fill our suffering with his presence."

*"Christ did not come into the world to eliminate suffering. Christ did not even come into the world to explain it. **He came to fill human suffering with his presence.** That is why where suffering is great, there God is, there Christ is in us. If you want to feel the presence of God, go into the hospitals. There you will see the suffering of innocent children, the suffering of old people. The presence of God, the presence of Jesus Christ is in all their suffering. When Christ came into the world, he suffered with me. He suffered with you. Can you imagine how much dignity he gave to human suffering to suffer with us -- to fill our suffering with his presence."*

Beloved here was a man who had moved from ideas of a God coming in a fast car to fix his life to being formed by the very Presence of that God that changed everything - Christ in you - the Hope of Glory!

After all, ***that's the reason I am here*** - to tell people the good news of the Kingdom of God Mark 1:37

Fixed or Formed - God's vision is bigger - it is called the Kingdom;

It calls us to look forward to look up. Remember what He said to Nathaniel and Andrew follow me and you will see Heaven. Heaven revealed in human lives, a treasure in jars of clay revealing the surpassing glory of the uncreated entering into our suffering to reveal a God who overcomes not by power or punishment but by love outstretched on a cross. **Love invites us to life formed by that love that can reveal Heaven on earth in real time and that is good news - the Kingdom is at hand.**

This is why I have come - not to run a ministry that puts you in a fast car fix;

Because you are so convinced I am not in your suffering...

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But to proclaim **nothing in all of created order can separate you** from the Love of God revealed in Christ - the best news is that I can meet you where you are and open the door of Heaven life in over death, light in darkness, freedom from lies that bind the mind and body, hope in the place of despair - life abundant in the face of all that comes to steal, kill and destroy.

Where did Simon find Jesus? ...in the dark of night...

- Not living in demand or fear or lack - living from His true self not demand or lack, connected to the Father to His true self - I wonder what is He praying?
- ***With God's help I will be myself today.***
- Little yeast works - living from the abundance of the heart of the father - perhaps praying the Lords prayer of the OT, The Lord is My shepherd...
- I came to reveal Good News this same freedom from lack and abundance is the Kingdom!
- Did it lead Him to a 'care' free life?

Good news

Changes everything - You don't have to have it all fixed to encounter life light and beauty

If you have this message formed in you have all things - God has come to you and me -

The one who emptied hell has come to reveal Heaven to you.

God I need this 'fixed' - His invitation?

- Mark 1:15 change your mind - He brings life in the face of death, light in darkness and gives beauty for ashes....change your mind -
- *With God's help I will be myself today*

St Theresa of Avila

Let nothing disturb you

Let nothing frighten you

All things are passing away

God never changes

Patience obtains all things

Whoever had God lacks nothing

God alone suffices.

Amen

Closing Prayer and Communion

Everlasting God,
you give strength to the powerless and power to the faint;
you raise up the sick
and cast out demons.

Make us agents of healing and wholeness,
that your good news may be made known
to the ends of your creation. Amen.

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