

The Humble Messiah
Mark 1:40-45

As His followers, as His people, for His glory, but also together as a church, as a body, as we meet together, we aim for the glory of God. That's what we desire.

There's a lot of benefits to studying a gospel like Mark or Matthew or Luke or John, and one of those benefits is definitely understanding what we believe, the what of what we believe. The gospels give us that opportunity to understand, not just the good news, but what it is and where it came from and get the foundation of it all, the historical background to, really, tangibly, understand what is the good news. Where did it come from, specifically, in the life of Christ, His ministry, His work, His death, His Resurrection on our behalf? So, the gospels give us that, that awesome joy of seeing the what and understanding that better and better.

But that's not it. There's more that comes from studying the gospels, particularly in the how. How we're to live, how we take what we see and what we find here in the life of Christ and not just let it be data, not just let it be information, not just let it be historical background, but let it become something that shapes the way we live and tells us how we ought to live. The Scriptures tell us that this must be another point and benefit of studying the life of Christ. Listen to 1 John 2:5-6; "By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked." You and I are here claiming to abide in Christ, claiming to be members together of the body of Christ, so the command from John in 1 John 2 is that we ought to walk in the same way that Jesus walked. We ought to live the same way that Jesus lived. We ought to conduct ourselves in the same manner in which He conducted Himself in His life on this earth.

So, I'd encourage you to keep that in mind. And that's where we get to turn our attention to as we come to Mark 1 today. At the end of our chapter in Mark 1, we get to see and learn and, hopefully, implement more of the how, how we ought to live, taking that straight from Jesus and how He lived, how He conducted Himself in this passage; so, we, too, can, hopefully, walk away being transformed, implementing this into our life, particularly in the realm and the means of humility as we see this come forth in Christ in the way He conducted Himself in our passage.

So, as we look to Mark 1:40-45, I'd like to remind you, just briefly, of what we've covered so far in Mark 1. We've seen the Messiah introduced in the first thirteen verses of this chapter as He came, and we saw the prophets talked about Him. John the Baptist spoke of Him. God the Father and the Spirit even affirmed Him as the Messiah. We saw what the Messiah was preaching and teaching in verses 14 and 15, that is that "...the kingdom of God is at hand..." And, there must be response. The response has to be belief and repentance; they must go together, and they must be appropriately taken into consideration and acted upon in regards to this gospel message.

Then, we got to see a lot of Christ's authority and how that showed in the way that He commanded - He spoke, and disciples would come and follow Him - and the way that He would speak and silence demons and cast them out of people, and the way that He would gently come up to someone and touch them and raise them up, and they would be healed, no longer sick. This is the authority of Christ the Messiah, over and over again being displayed as we've been looking at.

And, then, we saw a shift last time in verse 35. We saw the mission of the Messiah. A lot of great miracles, a lot of great displays of Christ's ability, His authority, His power, but we quickly need to realize, and not be mistaken, that Jesus did not just come for miracles. He did not come to be an entertainer. He did not come to be this magician that would do miracles. His purpose is explicitly stated in verse 38 of chapter 1; "...he said to them, 'Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out.' " We understood that these miracles have an important function, and that is undergirding and supporting the very words that Jesus was teaching. How can you believe, how can you trust, how can you know, that what this man is saying is truth? Look at the miracles. They affirm. They give credence to everything that He is speaking and saying.

As Jesus went on this preaching tour throughout Galilee (which is what we saw), He left the town of Capernaum and started to go to these other cities and towns as verse 39 stated, "...he went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons." This was His goal. This was His mission, and this is what He did. He went throughout all of Galilee finding these different towns and cities, going into synagogues, preaching, teaching about the gospel of the kingdom, demanding repentance and belief.

Our passage today provides a transition from that - a preaching tour in the region of Galilee - to what we find in chapter 2:1; “And when he returned to Capernaum after some days...” Because of our passage today, Jesus will have to withdraw. He will have to retreat because of what takes place in verses 40 through 45 during this preaching tour in Galilee, and it’s in this preaching tour that I hope we can fix our attention on the humility of Christ. I pray that as we see and observe and examine how Christ conducted Himself with this leper, with the people, in humility, that might, too, may drive us, drive us to be humble people, not just knowing what we believe and what Christ did, but how to live that out and how Christ lived.

So, turn, if you’re not already there... let’s go to Mark 1, and let’s look at verses 40 through 45, right now. “And a leper came to him, imploring him, and kneeling said to him, ‘If you will, you can make me clean.’ Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand and touched him and said to him, ‘I will; be clean.’ And immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean. And Jesus sternly charged him and sent him away at once, and said to him, ‘See that you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, for a proof to them.’ But he went out and began to talk freely about it, and to spread the news, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter a town, but was out in desolate places, and people were coming to him from every quarter.” Today’s story - we see and we learn of this interaction Jesus has with the leper, which is also found in Matthew’s account and Luke’s account of the gospel and the life of Christ. But we get to emphasize what Mark emphasizes for us here in this story, in this miracle, in this healing, that takes place. In verse 40, we find the scene that gets set before us, and that simply is this plea for purity that comes from this leper - that comes from this leper; “And a leper came to him, imploring him, and kneeling said to him, ‘If you will, you can make me clean.’ ” Recognizing he was unclean, pleading, making this plea unto Jesus, that he might be purified and made clean.

Well, we haven’t encountered leprosy thus far in the gospel. So, what is leprosy, exactly? Because we have an understanding of leprosy in our time in Hansen’s disease and some of the medical kind of symptoms and things that surround it... but what about in this time, in the time of Jesus? In the Old Testament even, we see leprosy come up often, and you could, actually, go all the way back to Leviticus chapter 13, and you see several different skin diseases and disorders, and they all kind of fall under this category of

leprosy. So, the way we might understand leprosy today is a little more specific to how they understood leprosy. So, this leper might not necessarily have what we might think a leper would have in our day and age, but nonetheless, it's this skin disease, skin disorder of some sort.

So, as far as this leper, what do we know about his leprosy in our text? Not a lot, all that Mark tells us is "...a leper came to him..." We don't know anything about his condition. We don't know the specifics about what his symptoms look like, what he was suffering from, exactly. We just know that a leper came to Christ. Luke gives us a little bit of help in Luke 5:12. He states, "While he was in one of the cities, there came a man full of leprosy." That helps us. That helps us understand that this wasn't just a minor or recent thing. This, more than likely, was pretty developed in how it had been plaguing this leper, and that he was described as Luke the doctor says, "...full of leprosy." Not a small thing, but a potentially ongoing disease that had, really, deteriorated this man and his flesh. So, you probably had some severe form about it.

Well, what are some of the things we do know, medically, about leprosy? Let me just speak to you a little bit about the medical side of leprosy and how it affects. It does not necessarily kill, but it does seem never-ending as far as its effects. It lingers for years, causing the tissues to degenerate and deform the body. It's, more likely, a disease of the nervous system even though we often associate it as a skin disease because of what it does. It starts in the skin, in the peripheral nervous system, then it spreads to other parts such as the hands, the feet, the face, the ear lobes. And patients with leprosy experience disfigurement of the skin and bones, twisting of the limbs and curling of the fingers to form the characteristic claw hand, facial changes include thickening of the outer ear and a collapsing of the nose. The largest number of deformities develop from loss of pain sensation due to extensive nerve damage. So, as these nerves are damaged more and more, these people have no ability to feel. They have no ability to understand and sense what's taking place, and, so, as their limbs and their body interacts with things, they don't know pain. They don't feel it so they don't know what they're doing, and they're literally wearing down their limbs and actually hurting themselves. Certain patients have been known to pick up boiling cups of water and not even be fazed by it at all. So, medically, this is a unique condition in the sense that these people don't feel pain. And that might seem like it's not that big a deal, but it actually is a huge deal because

of what it does to their body. Pain is a good thing. Pain is helpful. It lets us know. It informs us when we're actually hurting ourselves, but that is not the case with how leprosy plagues the body. Pain is gone; therefore, your body starts to wear down because you don't understand your own strength, and what you're doing to your body. So, that's the medical side of leprosy.

But there's more. There's more than just this medical suffering, this physical ailment that comes from leprosy. There's also the social side of it, and how it affects. Lepers were ostracized. They were outcasts. Leper colonies you've heard of - they're outside the city, away from everybody else, because of their condition and how they might be contagious and unclean. Leviticus 13:45-46 states it this way, "The leprous person who has the disease shall wear torn clothes and let the hair of his head hang loose, and he shall cover his upper lip and cry out, 'Unclean, unclean.' He shall remain unclean as long as he has the disease. He is unclean. He shall live alone. His dwelling shall be outside the camp." Not a fun lifestyle to have. In fact, when they talk about treating it and dealing with it in Leviticus 13 and 14, there wasn't anything they can do. There was no cure. There was no ability to treat it. All that the leper could do was hope that God would heal them in time, then they could come show them self to the priest, and the priest would simply say you're still unclean or you're clean. There was no way to, actually, treat this.

In fact, lepers and their conditions and their social life was so terrible that rabbis of ancient Judaism - they brag about how they treated lepers. They brag about finding lepers and throwing rocks at them to force them outside of the camp. They marked down specifics and spatial limitations for how close a leper can even come to walled cities and people or even the trees that people might frequent. Josephus an early Jewish historian around this time, the time of Christ - he writes that interacting with a leper was essentially tantamount to interacting with a corpse because of what it did. When you interacted with a leper, you became unclean, just as if you were interacting with a dead body, a corpse. This is an outcast, someone that is absolutely suffering without even feeling it and knowing it but, also, socially suffering away from people.

So, we look back at our text in verse 40, and this leper came to Jesus. Right away, that shocks us. Why would he enter into whatever city this is that Jesus is, wherever Jesus might be at this time? He comes and approaches. He shouldn't be doing this. He's an outcast. He knows that. This is not what

lepers are to do. They're unclean. They should be far away, but here he is approaching Jesus, and "...imploring him, and kneeling [before] him..." Notice the faith of this leper. Somehow the information had got out. Somehow, as Jesus is doing His amazing miracles and this authority and ability, it starts to spread in terms of the message and the word of this Messiah. And so, even the lepers that are out in leper colonies, they start to hear of this.

And notice the faith that he has to abandon that desolate place and to come and encounter Jesus and the city. He's confident. He's confident in the ability of Jesus. He's confident in the power that Christ possesses. He knows that. That's why he comes, and he's willing to risk all this, and he kneels in this posture of worship, even, before Jesus the Messiah. His attitude is humility. It's worship. It's desperation. He has no other hope, and so, he comes to the only hope that he knows at this time. He's confident that Jesus has absolute power and ability, and the only thing that would hang up his ability to be cleansed is the will of God. He says, "If you will, you can make me clean." He comes. He risks everything, knowing that he is unclean, entering the city, approaching Jesus, kneeling before Him, confident in His ability, and cries out, and asks if He is willing. Is this Your plan? Is this Your desire? Do You see this as fit and well? Is this Your pleasure to heal me? Because, if it is, it'll be done. I know that for a fact. A simple, yet, great model for us even in our own prayer life. Whereas we can come and approach God and have this limited view of God, still. We can read the stories. We can be familiar with what took place, but we can pray and still talk to God in such a way as if He's limited. We kind of have an idea of how much God does, and He doesn't do anything too extreme, so when there are extreme prayer requests, we realize it's probably not going to happen. That's not the case for this leper. No one could be more down and out than this guy, socially, physically, just completely cut off, and yet he is confident in the ability of Christ. So, also, we must approach God with this confidence, that He's able to do far more than we can ask or think or imagine.

Also, notice that he rests the request on one simple thing, the will of God - the will of God. Do your prayers, do my prayers, do our prayers match this where we are praying, not in this selfish way, not in this desire for God to sign off on a plan that I've come up with? Because we're good at doing that. We're good at coming up with what we think things ought to look like, a future, a present, how someone needs to change, and we offer that to God,

and we say, look, we thought it through, trust... we did the work for You God. You just sign off on this, and we're good to go. But that's not how God operates, and that's not how we approach Him. It's His will, and we come submitted to that, surrendered to His will, as this leper does, surrendered, confident and full of faith in Christ. Do we ultimately desire God's will or plan every interaction we have with Him through prayer?

Jesus responds in verses 41 and 42, and we find the merciful miracle. After this leper comes pleading for purity, Jesus responds in the affirmative. Verse 4; "Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand and touched him and said to him, 'I will; be clean.' And immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean." Notice the motivation, what kicks it all off for Jesus - very simple in verse 41; "...moved with pity..." compassion, mercy. Jesus is able to sympathize immediately with this man. Right away, you would expect His response more to be something like what are you doing here. If I wanted to heal you, I'll come out to you. You get out of here. You stay out of the city. How dare you come over here right now and try and approach Me. I'm on a mission. I'm preaching here. I have things to do. You're a leper. If I want to deal with you, I'll come to you. That's not what Jesus does. Jesus immediately sympathizes with this man. He immediately understands the physical ailment and the social outcast that this man has been, and He's moved. He's moved as He interacts with this leper, this hideous man, that approaches. He's moved with compassion and mercy.

It's interesting to note that Jesus isn't like this super, kind of, superman, super-human, kind of, person that was just there, and people were coming up, touching Him, and He was speaking and cleansing people left and right and casting out demons, and He didn't care. He was attached. He cared deeply. He was invested in everything that took place. When people did touch Him, and they got healed, He wanted to know who it was. He cared. He has this mercy. He has this... He's moved. He has compassion for these people, that's why we describe Him as our High Priest. He's our merciful High Priest and He can sympathize with us in our weaknesses, and this is a perfect display of that sympathy, mercy, and compassion.

Notice how He heals this man. How easy it could've been for Jesus to say you're clean. Get out of here. It states very clearly; "...he stretched out his hand and touched him..." And you think, why? You didn't have to touch this guy. He's a leper. He's unclean. In fact, we know you should not be

doing that. You don't even come close to them, nor would you even think about touching them. Why would You do this, Jesus? You have the power. You have the ability. Just speak it. But that's not the case. Jesus, in His mercy, in His compassion, in His care, stretches out His hand - is willing and bold enough to touch this man in healing him. Just as Jesus came along side Simon's mother-in-law and helped her up as she was healed of the fever, so, too, He comes along side this leper, and He touches him - willing to be merciful and compassionate to this hideous leper in this moment. This is not the typical way of associating with, once again, disease or sickness or contagious symptoms. You don't normally take clean people and put them towards the unclean people, and that'll make them clean. You keep unclean people quarantined away from all the clean people. But that's not the case with Jesus, His power, His display of His authority, once again, coming through, He has no worries when it comes to this. This does not affect Him. He is the Messiah. This is a clear example of it, again, for us in the gospel of Mark.

Notice this word, this phrase, really, that Mark likes to use over and over again in verse 42, "...and immediately..." Just, kind of, fast paced, action packed, gospel as we go from place to place and even within the stories, these things are happening quickly, immediately. Immediately, in verse 42, the leprosy left him, just like, immediately, the demons came out of people, and, immediately, the illness and the disease left people so, too, this leprosy was gone. There was not this gradual healing. Once again, it was not Jesus saying you'll be clean. Give it a year. Go wash yourself multiple times. It was right there. It was immediate. Whatever sores this guy had on his face, they were gone. Whatever his limbs look like and whatever they'd developed into, they had been restored and healed immediately, right there. However unrecognizable this guy had become, he was now recognizable, and people saw who they used to know before the leprosy. Immediately, right on the spot, in a supernatural fashion, this healing takes place. This is Jesus's mercy coming out as He heals this man.

Notice just even the humility in the fact that Jesus interacts with him. He's willing. Jesus's not above this. He could be. He's the Messiah. He's God. He could easily decide what His agenda and schedule for the day is and what kind of people are worthy enough to come and speak to Him. That's not the case. Jesus is willing to be interrupted. He's willing to associate and even touch this leper and heal him and take the time necessary - the humility of

Christ and this ministry. And this humility continues in verses 43 and 44 where we see the meek mandate - the meek mandate. Our account is an interesting one here. It's not just a typical healing account where you have someone in need, someone with a problem. Jesus comes with the solution, heals, and then, everyone has a great day. There's more to it. Mark summarizes all the problem and the healing right there in verses 40 through 42.

But there's more to this that he gives us, that we find in verses 43 and 44 that give us more emphasis to this; "And Jesus sternly charged him and sent him away at once, and said to him, 'See that you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, for a proof to them.'" ["...Jesus sternly charged him and sent him away at once..."] What is happening here? Why this detail? Why this part of the story? Why is it included? Why does Jesus act like this? The word here, "...Jesus sternly charged him..." or warned him or whatever your version might say, it's strong, almost violent a little bit. This is Jesus kind of getting very intentional with this man, "...and sent him away at once..." immediately, again, that word used. And then what does He say? "See that you say nothing to anyone..." What is happening here? Why is Jesus doing this? Why is He acting in this way?

Why is He quickly charging this man to leave and go and speak to no one? It's something we need to deal with because it comes up in Mark. It's somewhat of a pattern as Jesus heals and interacts with people. If you'll be alright with this, let's take a moment and go to Mark 5. Go to Mark 5:43. You can keep your spot in Mark 1. We'll be back, but we need to see this pattern unfold. In Mark 5, at the end of the chapter, we see this amazing story of Jesus interacting with a 12-year-old girl that He brought back from the dead. And what we find is the end in verse 43; "And he strictly charged them that no one should know this..." ["And he strictly charged them that no one should know this..."] Again, Jesus saying don't talk about this. Move on to Mark chapter 7. Mark chapter 7:36, another healing account here - this time, Jesus healing a deaf man - and in verse 36; "And Jesus charged them to tell no one. But the more he charged them, the more zealously they proclaimed it." Jesus demanding this. Once again, Mark chapter 8, verse 26, Jesus healing a blind man at Bethesda - and at the end in verse 26; "And he sent him to his home, saying, 'Do not even enter the village.'" So, this is a pattern that unfolds over and over again, particularly in Mark's gospel.

And we need to ask why as we come back to Mark 1 in our account at the end of chapter 1. Why? Why is He doing this? Why is He sternly charging and warning this man? Why is He sending him immediately? Why is He telling him to not talk to anybody? Why? Jesus really could have gone a different direction with this. He really could have taken advantage of this situation and, really, made it point to Him in many regards. Jesus could have allowed this to be a time where He got everyone's attention, said everybody gather around, look at this leper that has come up to me, and watch. What's your name? How long have you been a leper for? All right? He could've made this big show and healed this man in front of everybody, and made sure that it was clear that everyone saw it, and that everyone would tell as many people as possible about how great He was. Jesus could have put on a show. He had the ability. He had the authority. That's not at all what happens in this passage. It's so subtle. It's humble. It's not flashy. It's not showy. It's not like the typical miracle workers of the day, and that's what they were. They were magicians, and they'd say, oh, when can I take advantage of the crowd? And what's the best time? And how can I pull my perfect trick to get people's attention and their money? That's not Jesus.

In fact, Jesus is definitely doing this because He doesn't want people's faith resting on miracles. Could He do miracles? Of course, and He does tons of them. In fact, the people - they don't ever get sick of them. They want more. They'll keep asking Him and telling Him, hey, we want a sign. Give us a sign. Give us more. And Jesus says this is not what's it about. As we already saw in verse 38 of our chapter, He said that He came to preach. He has a message to proclaim. Jesus is not wanting to do this plethora of miracles to get more and more people to come in and give Him more attention, more popularity, make Him the celebrity that He wants to be so badly. That's not the case because He doesn't want people to have faith in miracles, and faith that's totally dependent upon these supernatural encounters. He's downplaying this miracle. He's not wanting to draw attention to what He's just done.

Another reason for this is Mark, if you consider the audience, Mark is writing to people in Rome, and if you're going to tell the church in Rome that your Savior, your Messiah - He died on a cross. He was crucified (a Roman practice that the Romans perfected). Really, so the Romans would tend to think immediately, I don't know that I want to worship someone that

was crucified. That's a criminal - sounds like someone that's not worth following. Well, in this, Mark is showing that Jesus was not the type of guy that was coming to be a rebel against all of Rome. Jesus was not coming as this political person or identity to shake things up and to try and threaten the emperor. That was not Jesus' operation. That's not what He was trying to do. He's not this insurrectionist, this rebellious insubordinate. That's not Jesus. He's downplaying this. He's not wanting this to be another opportunity for Him to say, now let's charge and take over Rome and own this land for ourselves as Israelites.

Jesus is not like these flashy, fake preachers and itinerant travelers that would come and bring these messages and do these miracles, just for the sake of money. That's not Jesus. We'll learn, when we get to Mark chapter 10, specifically, Jesus' aim and ambition in all this. In Mark 10:45, we learn very clearly that Jesus "...came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life [up] as a ransom for many." This was Jesus' operation. He was not coming to do more and more miracles so more and more popularity would come towards Him. He came to offer the truth and the message of truth that people would believe in, the message, not the miracles; and He came to do it in this way, in a manner of humility. That's why He's downplaying this and telling this man to be quiet and get out of here right away. Go!

Well, where's He telling him to go to? He says, "...go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, for a proof to them." Jesus is saying you need to go because you need to anyways. In order for you to be formally declared clean in Israel, you need to go to Jerusalem. You needed to go to the priest there, and you need to offer your sacrifices. This is all on line with Leviticus 14 and what was commanded. So, Jesus says get on your way, and get out of here, and don't talk about this. I'm not wanting more and more popularity. I'm not wanting more and more people to gather around and see more tricks. That's not the intention. Jesus wants this man to go, comply with the Law, do what the Law of Moses said, so that he can be brought back into social interaction. He can be declared clean by the priest, and this man, this former leper, can now be no longer socially an outcast but with the people in his city.

As Jesus interacts with this leper in this way of humility, not bringing more attention to Himself, it makes us question even for ourselves, how do we go about doing what we do? What is our attitude? What is our mindset? Why?

What is our motive? Why? Why do we do it? It's so easy to be caught up in the fact that there's a task to be done; if someone's watching and can appreciate it, then I'll do it. We love doing things for the approval of others. We love hearing that. We love people noticing what we do, and so, when a task comes up or an opportunity arises that's behind the scenes, and no one will see, we put it off or we find someone else to do it or we find a reason why we shouldn't do it because, clearly, that's not me. I'm above that. That's for someone lower to do. All of a sudden we become a different person. But if someone's watching then we're willing to do it; we're willing to engage in this task. Why? Because we want to point to our self, because we have this desire that is, just in all of our flesh, to have people appreciate us, to look at us, to get the fame, to get popularity. It's something we crave and love.

But this was not Jesus. Jesus was humble. He desired to get the attention away as He heals this man and tries to send him on his way not talking. Jesus conducted Himself with humility. He interacted with a leper that no one would do, and He did not make a scene of it. Could you imagine if the Pharisees did this? Could you imagine what this would have looked like? How much they would have played this up - we're talking about people that when they offer their money they blow trumpets. When they fast, they make sure they yell out, and they dress differently so everyone around them can know that they're fasting. We're talking about people that are all about the show. They have religiously perfected the show. What would the Pharisees have done with this? If they had this opportunity, they would've loved to play this up and get as much attention as possible. But that's not Jesus. That's not our Savior. He's humble. He's lowly. He's meek. He is compassionate. He interacts with this man. He heals this man, and He sends him on his way because Jesus is not in this for the celebrity acclamation. That's not the point. Jesus wants this guy to be assimilated back into society, and He tells him to go make his offering as Moses commanded. This is how Jesus was meek, and this is how He was humble in His interactions.

The response of this man shows up in verse 45, and we see the rising reputation - the rising reputation. In verse 45, we read, "But he went out and began to talk freely about it and to spread the news, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter a town but was out in desolate places, and people were coming to him from every quarter." He blatantly disobeyed, blatantly disregarded, what Jesus had to say about this and immediately started talking

to people. And why not? How could he... how could he keep such amazing news to himself? He had to talk about this. He had to explain. This is marvelous. This is amazing, and so he speaks openly and freely. The impact of this is that Jesus could no longer openly enter a town. Apparently, this man was quite the talker, or this story got around in a particular, unique fashion. Not only was Jesus casting demons out of people, not only was He healing certain diseases and sicknesses, now, even lepers, the outcasts, are completely transformed and physically renewed. This is apparently blowing people away to a whole new level that Jesus can't even enter... He can't even openly enter a town, but He now has to be relegated to desolate places, on the outskirts, outside of town. It's an ironic twist that takes place. This leper that was in desolate places, this leper that was an outcast, has now interacted with Jesus, and they've switched places. Now, this leper can be one and assimilated with society in the city again, but Jesus, because of His fame and, now, this popularity that's spread, He is now in the desolate places.

He is now an outcast, but that does not stop people from coming to Him as it says in the end of our verse; "... people were coming to him from every quarter." From everywhere, people come streaming out to Jesus. The word has gotten out even more. The news has spread. So that, in the midst of this preaching ministry, this preaching tour that takes place in Galilee (as we read in verse 39 last time), in the midst of it taking place, this account takes place and happens, and now Jesus has to withdraw for some time. And that's why we read in chapter 2 verse 1; "... when he returned to Capernaum after some days..." Some time, now, has to pass where Jesus is no longer even in towns. He's not allowed to go in synagogues anymore because He's can't even go into cities. Despite this act of humility on Jesus' part, people still come streaming out to Him, still come to see what He will do and to hear what He will preach.

This is the humility of Christ that is now been exemplified for us. And we've been commanded. We've been commanded, if we abide in Him, that we ought to walk as He walked. We need to consider, how are we walking? How are we living? Is it all about us? That's our default. We're so good at that. We're good at making sure people see us. We're good at making sure people hear about us and what we did. We're so naturally bent on bringing the attention right back to our self. But that was not our Savior, and that was not how He walked. So, we, too, must consider how we can walk in

humility, in lowliness, in meekness, in compassion and mercy, tenderness, not looking to ourselves, for remembering what He said, "...the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve..." That's how we ought to walk. It's not about us and competing in ministries, or why we do what we do around here with bible study or an outreach activity. It's not about us and never has been, never will be if you're in the body of Christ. So, get in line now and humbly serve Christ because that's where we're going to be in eternity, in humility pointing to Him who gets all glory, our head Jesus Christ.