

Lessons on Miracles And Healing

Mark 1:29-45

Introduction

Sometimes when we walk past a promoter in a grocery store, we might be offered “samples” of food being sold. Just like that Jesus’ miracles and healings are samples of His divine authority and who He is. We shouldn’t focus too much on the samples and miss the main character and his identity. The series of short episodes in Mark 1:21-45 describes the remarkable impact of Jesus’ early Galilean ministry, with particular emphasis on the growing excitement aroused by his proclamation of the Kingdom of God and the restoration he brings. Where Jesus is present, so too is God’s power to heal and deliver. While Jesus carried out these healings and chased off demons, his resolve to stay close to His heavenly father could be seen in his rising early and going alone to a quiet place to pray.

For Study and Discussion

- 1) Read verses 29-34.
 - a. How did Jesus exercise his authority here?

 - b. Who were healed by Jesus in Mark 1:30-31 and 1:32-34?

 - c. Describe the crowd He attracted. Verse 32, 33 and 37. Why were the crowd looking for Jesus?

 - d. Why do you think Jesus did not permit the demons to speak about Him? Verse 34

- 2) Read verses 35-39.
 - a. Jesus must have been exhausted from the previous day, yet he “rose early the next day”. Why?

 - b. What was Jesus’ response when disciples came looking for him? Verse 37, 38. What does this tell us about Jesus’ priorities?

- 3) Read verse 40-45. Jesus cleanses a leper, who in those days would have lived an ostracised life, being pronounced unclean (Leviticus 13:1-3).
 - a. What moved Jesus to heal the leper?

- b. Jesus stretched out His hand to touch the leper. From other records, Jesus could heal from a distance, why do you think He chose to touch the leper?

- c. Jesus commanded the leper not to tell anyone. Why? Consider what happened when the leper went out and told everyone about his healing.

- d. Read Leviticus 14:3-7. Although priests could not cleanse lepers of their disease, they were the ones who can pronounce that they have been healed and thus no longer considered unclean. Why do you think Jesus commanded the now-healed leper to show himself to the priest even though he did not want the public to know about the healing?

However, Jesus often commanded silence and sought to minimise the proclaiming of His true identity and miraculous powers (cf. 1:25, 34; 3:12; 5:43; 7:36; 9:9). Why did Jesus do this? Some contend that Mark and the other Gospel writers inserted these commands for silence as a literary device to explain why the Jews did not recognise Jesus as the Messiah during His earthly ministry. This view is called “the messianic secret,” that is, Jesus’ messiahship was kept secret.

A more satisfactory view is that Jesus wanted to avoid misunderstandings that would precipitate a premature and/or erroneous popular response to Him (cf. comments on 11:28). He did not want His identity declared till He had made the character of His mission clear (cf. comments on 8:30;9:9). Thus there was a progressive withdrawal of the veil from His identity until He openly declared it (14:62; cf. 12:12).

Discipleship Pointers

- Sin ostracises us from God. Jesus’ mission is not to only heal the physical aspects of humanity, but the spiritual breakage of humanity from God.
- We should put all our healing needs, physical and above all spiritual needs unto Jesus.

Family/Group Moments

- Discuss how small groups and the church can learn from Jesus in prioritising between doing good works and spreading the good news.
- Do we offer “samples” and then follow-up with the message like Jesus?