

## The Good Life involves Balance & Purpose

Peter is the typical preacher. He is so enamored by their instant success and popularity that he, at times, loses his head! Too quick to forget their purpose and too quick to respond to the cries of the people, He interrupts our Lord's praying. His report suggests that the multitudes were already lining up for their miracle. The request was for Jesus to leave His quiet time with the Father and to return to His healing ministry at once! Oh, how much they had to learn!

## The purpose of Jesus' healing ministry

John 20:30-31

1. to testify of His identity as the Messiah<sup>5</sup>

"Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast *day*, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did." (John 2:23)

Dr. Doug Bookman notes, "The miracles themselves were not ways for Jesus to show off His power, especially since He had given up His former glory to come to earth and do the will of the Father in heaven. Instead, the miracles vindicated His claims about Himself and His teaching. Although He didn't need to perform any miracles and refused to perform them on demand, they came so that others might believe."<sup>6</sup>

2. to gain opportunity to preach the Gospel that men might believe

"If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father *is* in me, and I in him." (John 10:37-38)

## Resources:

<sup>1</sup> Slick, Matt. CARM. Retrieved from <https://carm.org/early-christians-called>  
Vines Expository Dictionary, 289.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongsg=G2048&t=KJV>  
Barnes, Albert. *Barnes' Notes on the New Testament*.

<sup>3</sup> Swindoll, Charles. *Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary of Mark*. Carol Stream: Tyndale House Publishers, 47.

<sup>4</sup> Barton, Ruth Haley, 2006. *Sacred Rhythms*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 37-38.

<sup>5</sup> Stewart, Don. Retrieved from [https://www.blueletterbible.org/faq/don\\_stewart/don\\_stewart\\_784.cfm](https://www.blueletterbible.org/faq/don_stewart/don_stewart_784.cfm)

<sup>6</sup> Bookman, Dr. Doug, 2020. CHRISTIANITY. Retrieved from <https://www.christianity.com/jesus/life-of-jesus/miracles/why-did-jesus-perform-miracles.html>

Swindoll, Charles. *Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary of Mark*. Carol Stream: Tyndale House Publishers, 48.



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The Good Life | Mark 1:35-39

In verses 16-34 Mark guides us into the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. As Peter reminds us that we should "follow his steps" (I Peter 2:21), Mark gives us exactly what those steps should be.

We must remember that the gospel of Mark is a call to *discipleship*. It is the call to follow the Lord Jesus. Mark's word is *akoloutheō* which means, "to come after, to accompany." The word literally means to go the same way as another.

Thus, Jesus Christ came to fulfill all righteous (Matthew 3:15), so that we may have a perfect pattern to emulate. He lived perfectly, so that He may live completely in us.

"Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." (II Corinthians 4:10-11)

No wonder the first disciples were called followers of "The Way."<sup>1</sup>

"And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem." (Acts 9:2, see also 19:9, 23, 22:4, 24:22)

Can you just imagine the conversations in the early church? "No, we cannot do that: that is not *the way* that Jesus lived. Don't talk *that way!* Don't treat one another *that way!* Don't believe *that way!* That is not what Jesus did!" The question in the early church was not, "What would Jesus do?" The question in the early church was, "What did Jesus do?"

Mark's lessons on discipleship, however, are not through, for on the morrow of the next day, the expected life of a true follower of Christ is exemplified through the ministry of Jesus. As we walk through this passage together, I want you to ask yourself if you are going the same way as Jesus... if you are truly following in His steps.

## The Good Life involves Rest

Somewhere between the hours of 4 and 6 am, Jesus Christ arose to greet a new day. Perhaps he thought of Jeremiah's inspiring words— "It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness." (Lamentations 3:22-23)

Perhaps, He reasoned within Himself— "This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. Save now, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity. (Psalm 118:23-25)

Jesus arose to greet a new day and to seek for the aid of His Father as He embarked upon a new day of blessings and opportunities for ministry.

The word here is *erēmos*, and it carries with it the idea that Jesus departed into an uninhabited place— a deserted place. Persons who were deprived of friends or loved ones in times of loneliness were known to be in these types of solitary places. Thayer's defines it as a place where one is, "deserted by others; deprived of the aid and protection of others, especially of friends, acquaintances, kindred; bereft."<sup>2</sup>

What, then, would cause Jesus to arise in the dead of night to find a place wherein no friend, no sheep, no loved one, and no companion might attend to Him?

### Jesus found that the wilderness was a place where the presence of God was most-easily enjoyed.

Matthew 4:4, 14:23, Mark 4:10, 4:34, 6:47, Luke 9:18, 36, John 6:15, 8:9

"And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him." (John 8:29)

### Why did Jesus resort to the wilderness for rest?

Do you not remember what the Lord Jesus busied Himself in on the Sabbath Day? Work! Labor! Healing! Teaching! Touching! Exorcising! The Son of God was always about the Father's business. Such work had created fatigue in the life, body, and soul of the God-man.

**And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him,** turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing." (Mark 5:30-32)

The word "virtue" here is the word *dunamis* from which we get our word "dynamite." It speaks of power to heal and to save. Simply touching the hem of Jesus' garment drew something out of Him. To this point, A.T. Robertson notes, "No real good can be done without the outgoing of power."

Saturday, then, was an unending succession of virtue going out of the body of Jesus. The sabbath featured one thirsty sinner after another dropping the bucket down into the soul of Jesus. Each demon exorcised... each illness healed... was a depletion of those power reserves held in the bosom of God's beloved Son. At this point, we ought not to forget the One of whom we speak. He is God of very gods, but He is a man. Let us **not** forget His humanity in His deity, nor His deity through His humanity. Jesus Christ was a man surrendered to both do the works of God and speak the words of the Father.

"Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou *then*, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." (John 14:9-10)

### Could it be that Jesus was accessing something in His humanity necessary to the work whereunto the Father had called Him?

Jesus knew that a wilderness was a place where *restoration* takes place (Mark 3:13). He knew that solitary places were places where *rest* could be enjoyed (see I Kings 19). They were places where *revelation* may occur (see Exodus 3).

So, when life and ministry drain you, you have to take a journey into the wilderness.

The Messianic prophecy of our Lord was this: "The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to *him that is weary*: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned." (Isaiah 50:4)

Jesus, therefore, is more than just giving us a good example in resting; He was availing Himself to a necessary component of His life. "Deity never needs sleep; humanity must rest," writes Charles Swindoll.<sup>3</sup>

In time, "Jesus seems to have little time for their ministry reports. He is concerned about the bigger issue of how they will sustain their spiritual life rather than being distracted by outward successes. Without watching any time at all, He invites them to experience solitude as a place of rest in God."<sup>4</sup>