

### 1:38-39

**But** This word along with “next towns” of this verse help us understand that Capernaum wanted to own the time of this Jesus, but that what ultimately moved Him to those other towns was His mission. **He said to them, “Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth.”** “According to Josephus, Galilee was a densely populated district, with upwards of two hundred villages, each containing several thousand inhabitants.”<sup>1</sup>

To answer this, one may need to see what Jesus didn't say: “that I may do more miracles there also, because for this purpose I have come forth.” Now, I think it should be pointed out that this was not that which we focused on a couple of weeks ago—“teaching with great authority” (mentioned twice in the episode of the demonic man in the synagogue). “Preaching” is a different word—meaning the “heralding of a message.” It's more than “conveying truth.” Now, in view of the reality that “teaching with authority” was more important to Mark than doing miracles in that episode of the synagogue, it should also be noted that **preaching** was more important to Jesus than doing miracles, and it was the reason He came to Galilee (1:14; 1:28).

Still, though, why did He need to come there? While there is room just in Mark that it could be “for this cause I came outside of town,” Luke 4:43 gives more of the idea that Jesus had been sent out long before and was still on mission (passive voice; perfect tense).

Let us at least be cognizant of the reality that if Mark's theme of “urgency” in Jesus' life means anything, Jesus was urgent about doing the will of His Father. “Let's get moving! I know why I am here!” This was not the encapsulated purpose of Jesus as stated in Mark 10:45, but it is just as required as part of the process. Likewise, we don't need to be as clear on the “big picture” of our lives as we need to be on the steps in front of us.

Jesus showed us that He don't save the world without giving His life as a ransom. He don't give His life a ransom if He didn't preach that Gospel proclaiming your work. He didn't don't preach that Gospel proclaiming that work if He didn't leave Capernaum. He didn't leave Capernaum if He didn't get up early enough to beat the crowd and meet with His Heavenly Father. Or, to say it in a way as a man I admire says it when he quoted somebody else: “Everybody wants to change the world, but nobody wants to do the dishes.”<sup>2</sup>

Some of you in your middle years, what are you doing here? What usefulness do you have? I may not be able to tell you that, but I can remind you that the most important thing today is that the Heavenly Father has your attention, and that you “abstain from fornication” (1 Thessalonians 4:3) and that you give thanks in everything (1 Thessalonians 5:18). Nothing fantastic, but everything honorable. I cannot tell you that you will be talked about in books, but I can tell you that if you care for your aging parents and pay your bills and cut your grass and be faithful to your church, you will be known as the one taking the step before you on the way to your questions being answered.

For our older friends, I cannot tell you “why you are still here,” and I wish you'd spare me the Halmark card nonsense that “you're still here because you got something to do.” With all the garbled factors of lengthened lives with reduced health and increased fear of death and decreased satisfaction of life, I think you know that kind of trite counseling doesn't help anybody.

At a minimum, the reason you're still alive is because you aren't dead. I cannot tell you that you “had some grand design or mission to your life” and that it is “still before you” or “somewhere behind you.” But what I can tell you is that you have oxygen and thoughts and some mobility and you can take a next step on the way to the final step.

You see, you will be known for something at the judgment, and maybe passing your time here on earth as a prayer warrior or a gardener or as a volunteer or as an honorable aunt or uncle or grandparent or parent isn't something you can see being talked about in Heaven...but if you throw off those honorable practices...that will most certainly be a topic when—as we heard in our passage in 2 Corinthians 10—we stand before “the judgment Seat of Christ.”

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<sup>1</sup> H. D. M. Spence-Jones, ed., *St. Mark*, vol. 1, The Pulpit Commentary (London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1909), 7.

<sup>2</sup> Preached by Mark Dever at T4G, 2016 (quoting Mike Borten; <http://t4g.org/media/2016/04/endurance-needed-strength-for-a-slow-reformation-and-the-dangerous-allure-of-speed/> (17:33), [accessed 3/13/17].

**39 And He was preaching in their synagogues throughout all Galilee,** Here we see that Jesus is following the newscasters of 1:29. We furthermore see that some come to Him without much work on His own (1:40).<sup>3</sup> In other words, Jesus already had credentials in these other towns from the “fame” of 1:29. **and casting out demons.** as He did in Capernaum (1:34). I really want to continue to press the issue that demonic activity must have been at a frightening crescendo in this part of the nation of the Gentiles.<sup>4</sup> We discussed this in the past passage and I wanted to be sure we crossed that here as well: **Casting out demons** accompanied **preaching in their synagogues.** I do think it is significant, though, that a great deal of fights were started by Jesus. Of all the things that could have been added to **preaching,** Mark picked out **casting out demons.**

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<sup>3</sup>This story, by the way, comes before the episode of the “fevered mother in law” in Matthew.

<sup>4</sup>I want to further confirm that his works confirmed his words (Hebrews 2:4).