

# Possibility of Deliverance

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*Deliverance*

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Well, this morning we've already been challenged about the importance of God's word, the importance in our individual lives, importance in our family's life, the individual in our church's, our community's life, and so today we're going to continue though about talking about the impact of the word of God. It's one thing to talk about possessing a copy of the word of God or having one on our shelf but what's the possibility if we actually take the words that are written here and actually believe them and apply them to our lives? And today, I want to speak from Mark 1. If you're new or a guest with us today, we're walking through the gospel of Mark in this season of our church's life, kind of what this theme of a word that may seem odd at first but it really resonates after awhile, this idea of deliverance, that God desires to set us free. God wants to take all the bondage that this world continually places upon us and he wants to relieve us of that. Another definition of deliverance is to be taken from one place to another. Some of you this morning, you're not in a place you need to be. You're in an area of life that you have no business and I want you to hear God loves you so much, he wants to set you free from whatever that is. But today, we're going to talk about going from just the importance of the Bible to the impact of the Bible, the possibility that whatever it is that we're dealing with, whatever we're struggling with, that we can go to the word of God and he, through his power and Spirit, will set us free.

Today in Mark 1, beginning in verse 32, this is kind of one of those stories in the gospel where if we had the resources, the means, it would make for a fascinating movie. It's only three verses beginning in verse 32. Jesus Christ and the apostles have gone into Simon Peter's house in Capernaum. There Peter's mother-in-law was sick and Jesus healed her and in chapter 2 there's going to be a man who is so ill that four of his good friends are actually going to cut a hole in a roof and deliver him into the presence of Jesus. But tucked between those two, what I like to call flannel board stories, easy to tell, wonderful stories to tell, there's this three verse section beginning in verse 32 that oftentimes we just read over it and I don't think we realize the impact of these verses. Verse 32 it says,

32 And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils. 33 And all the city was gathered together at the door. 34 And he healed many that were sick

of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him.

Why is this such a significant story? Look in verse 33, it says the entire city came out. Everybody who caught wind, everybody who heard about what was taking place according to verse 32, in the middle of the night comes out to see what is happening. What was taking place in this passage? Notice it says there were many that had physical illnesses that walked away whole. There were many that were struggling with the spiritual shackles of life. Maybe it was emotional, maybe it was mental, whatever it was, all I know is it wasn't physical and for the first time in a long time they could sleep.

The whole city showed up, so the possibility according to scripture is that you and I can experience what they experienced as well. How does it happen? Look in verse 32. I call it the manifestation. How did we know what was wrong? It says, "And at evening, when the sun did set." Now I guess it's the thought of being a parent of teenagers and maybe you've heard the old statement before, there is nothing good that any good old Baptist should be doing after 10 o'clock at night. You've kind of heard that statement, but most of us would testify if we're going to get ourselves in trouble, usually it takes place at night, does it not? But think about what's happening here. These are people that are physically sick, these are people that are emotionally, spiritually struggling. How many times have you woken up "on the wrong side of the bed" because whatever it is that you can't get well from kept you up all night? You know, rarely does it keep us up at 10:30 in the morning. We're at work, we're doing whatever we do, but that time where we want some rest, that time where we want some sleep, it keeps us up. If you've ever had a physical injury of sorts, for some reason and I've had a few in my life, why is it that the one time we should get some rest, the one time we should get some peace is oftentimes the worst part of the night? We just lay there in agony and in pain.

It's not just a physical issue, is it? In fact, some of the biggest struggles we have in life are between our ears. Our doubts, our angst, our bitterness, our whatever it may be, struggling with what happened yesterday or what may happen tomorrow, how many times when whatever it is that's got us bound up shows up when the sun goes down, does it not? We're exhausted, we're worn out. We finally lay our head to bed and all of a sudden our brain wakes up and says, "Remember that thing you can't get over? Remember that issue that's coming up that you don't know how you're going to handle?"

So in other words, today when we talk about the possibility of deliverance, I want you to make this personal but I also want you to look at it as a culture and as a community. What is it in your life that keeps you up at night? What is it in your life that you wake up and it's on your heart and your mind and it bothers you? And what is it about our community and our culture that does the same? What keeps our community up at night? What keeps our culture up at night? That is the issue among many issues that needs to be addressed in our life.

So what's the methodology? How does Jesus, for lack of better terms, how does he attack that struggle? How does he attack that problem? How does he attack that illness? I want

you to notice in verse 32 it says that they brought him to Jesus. Do you know what this passage doesn't say? It doesn't say that he knocked on everybody's door in town and said, "Hey, I'm here to help you, would you let me?" No, no. We discover that those that were healed, those that were delivered, those that experienced what happens in this story, that they actually left where they were and went to Jesus. Why is that important? It reminds me of one of my favorite characters in the Bible, a guy by the name of Bartimaeus. Bartimaeus is going to show up in chapter 10 of the gospel of Mark. He's blind Bartimaeus. He cannot see. He begs for a living. When Jesus Christ comes, and by the way it's Passover week, tens of thousands of people are lining the streets. I mean, it is the ultimate Jerusalem Tiger Walk, if you can imagine that for a moment.

When Jesus calls him, he gets up and it says he leaves his coat there. Why is that significant? How is a blind guy going to find his coat in 10,000 people if he doesn't believe that this is what's finally going to do it? He'd been to the doctors. He'd been to those who given probably wisdom and insight. Why is that important? Because the first aspect of the methodology of Jesus is if you want to be delivered, if you want to be set free from whatever it is that has you all bound up, is you've got to be willing to leave whatever it is that you're using to address it and trust him to take care of it. There's a Bible word for that, it's called repentance. It means to turn around. It means to walk away from and towards something else. Those that were healed in this passage were willing to leave whatever it was that wasn't providing what they needed and not say, "Hey, Jesus, I want to do you and this." No, no, no. They left that. They came to him alone.

The second thing is this, verse 32, it says they brought him all that were diseased, and those that were possessed by the devils. I want you to notice something that Jesus Christ does that very few of us do, and those of us that do it may not do it very well. He was willing under his diagnosis to say there are two types of problems, there are physical problems and there are spiritual problems. Now we've all experienced this at some level, particularly if you have young children and you've gone to a pediatric clinic or a pediatric hospital. Usually, not all the time, but typically when you walk into a facility such as that for children, they usually separate you at the door. There is the sick side and there is the well side. You're there to get help but it turns on what problem you've got to what side you go to. If you're just there to go for a football physical, you don't go to the sick side because you're not sick; you go to the well side because you're just making sure everything is okay to compete. At the same time, if you've got 104 fever, you don't go to the well side, you go to the sick side. Ladies and gentlemen, in our culture today, it doesn't matter what the problem is, it doesn't matter what the issue is, it doesn't matter what the struggle is, do you know what the overwhelming majority of us do when whatever it is comes and manifests itself in our life? We walk in the door and we go to the physical side. That's what we do. We say surely, surely, there is a prescription that can fix this. Surely there's a plan that I can put in place in my life. If I just do A, B, C and D, maybe I can "see this removed from my life." But can I ask you a question? How many of you today have spent years and years and years going to the physical side and you're no better than you were years ago?

You see, when Jesus meets him in the street, I can almost see it in my mind, it's like that well side/sick side, it's almost like he looked at somebody and said, "Okay, that's spiritual. That one's physical. Physical. Physical. Spiritual Spiritual." You know in the next chapter, there are individuals that are critical of Jesus and it says he knew what was going on in their heart. He didn't even have to ask them what was wrong. He didn't have to ask them what their symptoms were. He knew exactly. Some of you have physical issues, physical problems, but some of us have spiritual issues and spiritual problems and I want you to see what Jesus did. Jesus did not send them all to the same side. Jesus did not say, "Okay, this is going to be like Oprah Show, you get a car, you get a car, everybody gets a car." He didn't do that. He said, "No, no, no, some of you need to be healed physically and some of you need to be delivered spiritually." That's an important aspect of Jesus' methodology. Not only do we have to be willing to leave whatever we're using to treat whatever it may be, but we've got to be willing to say, "Jesus, I'll allow you to address it as what you claim it is and not what the world says that it is."

Notice the last methodology here in verse 34. It says he healed many that were sick, diverse diseases, he cast out many devils, this is the interesting part, he suffered not the devils to speak because they knew him. Now if you want a little more dramatic illustration, you just back it up a few verses and we studied it last week, there they are in the synagogue, there's a man with an unclean spirit and he even makes the statement that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. I mean, that's a pretty good statement. "Have you come to judge us," which he will one day. "Have you come to do this," which he will one day. Do you find it interesting that Jesus does not allow whether it's the unclean man in the story before or the individuals that in the street, he does not allow them to speak out of their struggle.

Now I want you to think about that for just a moment. How many times have you had to apologize to a loved one because maybe you were experiencing a physical pain and you said something to them that you would have normally not said, but because your body was hurting so bad, there were things that came out of your mouth that should have never been said? How many times are you struggling so much emotionally, mentally, spiritually, that you say things to those that you deeply love or you say things to those that maybe you don't even have a relationship with, that you think back and go, "Man, I wish I would have never opened my mouth"? One of the most dangerous times to open your mouth is when you're in pain. One of the most dangerous times to speak out loud is when you're in the bondage and the shackles of life?

Why is this important? Because Jesus' methodology is completely different than the world's. Do you know what the world says? Talk it out. The world says speak it out. The world says it doesn't matter what you're dealing with, put it on social media for everybody to see. Do you know what Jesus says? "No, don't put that out there. Are you struggling, you're hurting? No, no, no, why don't you leave what you're doing to fix it, come to me. Don't speak to it, just let me cure you."

Can you imagine going into a doctor's office today, typically they'll ask you symptoms, they'll ask you what you've been doing, we know the routine, right? Can you imagine

going to the doctor's office, you're sitting on that table with that white piece of paper, feet just dangling, doctor walks in, you start to open your mouth and he goes, "Hush. No, don't need it. You don't need to speak anything. I got this." What would your first response be? Second opinion. Your first response would be, "Whoa, I don't care if the copay is covered, I'm going somewhere else." Isn't that often how we respond to Jesus? Jesus says, "You don't have to talk about this, you don't have to open this can, you don't have to go there, you don't have to talk about how bad it hurts, just leave whatever you've been doing to treat it and let me take care of it."

Now can I share with you the magnitude of this? How does this impact us? What's the magnitude for our lives? I want to deal with this from a quantitative and a qualitative standpoint. There's a part of this passage that seems somewhat contradictory but it's not. I want you to look in verse 32, it says, "they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils." Then you go to verse 34. When you first read this statement, it might cause a little discomfort, "And he healed many that were sick, and he cast out many devils." Why could that be disconcerting? Because there is a part of you that says, "Well, time out now. If all those that were sick and all those that were diseased came but he was only able to heal many, does that mean that there's the possibility that something I'm struggling with Jesus can't fix?" No. There's a verse in between that's strategic. Verse 32, they brought all that were sick and diseased, and then in verse 33 it says the whole city showed up. Why is that important? When we talk about what is it, what's the quantity that Jesus can take care of, I want you to hear something: nobody, nobody ever died in the physical presence of Jesus Christ. Nobody. What do we find in this passage? Those that were healed and those that were sick were the ones who actually came out into the street and said, "Jesus, I need you to fix this." What does verse 33 mean? That means there were people who were holding on to whatever it was. There are people that were clinging to whatever strategy they'd put in place. There were those who showed up in the street sick who went back home sick because they weren't interested in Jesus taking care of it, they wanted to hold on to whatever they were doing. There were those that were struggling mentally, emotionally, spiritually, who went home that night and still did not sleep. Why? Because when everybody was coming for Jesus to heal them, they stayed back but then the fireworks went off and they decided to show up and say, "Well, that's not for me." You see, quantitatively when you look at this passage, every single person who said I'm going to turn away from, I'm going to repent from, I'm going to change my ways and trust Jesus alone, every one of those persons was healed and every one of them were delivered.

Now can I give a little qualifier there? It does not have a part of the verses that says that it looked the way they expected it. I don't know about you but rarely does the Lord do something in my life and I'm going, "That's exactly how I drew it up." No. Usually the Lord does something in my life and I'm like, "I never saw that one coming. I never expected it to look like that." And one of our issues that we have when we talk about quantifiably is we say, "Well, why have I experienced what this person experienced, or why hasn't my life looked like theirs?" Because the way he delivers you and the way he touches you may be different than the way he touches someone else. Those of you who've had multiple children in your home, you don't raise them completely identically.

Sometimes they have different schools, different methodologies, different strategies. Sometimes the Lord may deliver your neighbor and it looked differently than him delivering you but he still delivers nonetheless.

Let's talk about quality. I want to go back to verse 32. You see, we live in the Western world, we live in a culture today that it doesn't matter what the problem is, it doesn't matter what the struggle is, it doesn't matter what the issue is, we firmly believe you give us enough time in a laboratory and we can solve this. You give us enough time sitting around the table debating it and discussing it, somehow, someway we can solve this. If we could just come up with a better plan, a better strategy, maybe a better playbook, we can do this. You see, for most of us, we have bought our culture's prescription that everything we're struggling with can be solved by a pill or a program. If you'll just take this pill, if you'll just go through these "steps," it will all be fine.

Here's a very important rhetorical question I need to ask some of you. How many of you have gotten to the point of the woman in chapter 5? There is a woman who has an issue of blood multiple years, in fact, the Bible says she wasted all of her living on doctors. Can we just broaden that for a moment? She's broke because she's tried everything but one thing. So what does she do? She gets into the crowd, she touches the hem of Jesus and she's immediately healed. You see, we talk about the possibility of deliverance today, maybe there's the possibility that whatever you're dealing with, whatever you're struggling with, whatever you're bothered by isn't physical, maybe it's spiritual. Do you know the beauty of that? When it comes to prayer there's no copay. When it comes to prayer there's no deductible. In fact, in Matthew 17:21 there's a man who had a son that was struggling with a very overt spiritual issue and do you know what he said? "Why can you heal my son but these disciples can't?" Remember his famous response, verse 21 of chapter 17? "These only come out by prayer and fasting."

My challenge for all of us today, I think all of us would agree the importance of the Bible but are we willing to live the impact of the Bible? Are we willing to look at some of the issues and struggles of our life, our culture's life and say, "You know, maybe this isn't physical, maybe this is spiritual. Maybe this isn't about having a better strategy, maybe this is about getting on our knees and turning it over to God."

Let's pray with our heads bowed and our eyes closed. Maybe this morning you're here as a long-term member, maybe you're here as a guest, you know, the main problem that humanity has irrespectively of the other issues is our sin problem, our rebellion against God, our continued resistance against God. One of the big problems is whatever your sin struggle is, whatever you're doing you shouldn't be doing, saying you shouldn't be saying, thinking you shouldn't be thinking, one of the biggest problems is you think somehow you can manage it, somehow you can take worldly means to somehow manage it. The Bible says whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. You see, your rebellion, your sin problem is a spiritual problem that only Jesus Christ can solve.

Maybe you're here today saying, "Do you know what? Maybe my struggle isn't physical, maybe it really is spiritual." Let's go back to step 1, has there been that time and that

place in your life where you've confessed that you were a sinner and you've asked Jesus to save you? That, my friends, isn't a physical solution, that is a spiritual solution. If you're here this morning and that's the place where you are, can I encourage you just to do what Romans 10 says? Just call on the name of the Lord. There's not a certain amount of words that you have to say in the right order, there's not a class you have to pass, a test you have to take, a hoop you've got to jump through, you've just got to cry out and say, "Jesus, I've got a sin condition and I'm trusting you to solve it."

If that's you this morning, can I encourage you just to have a conversation with the Lord. You don't have to say it out loud. You don't have to say the same words that I or somebody else would say but maybe your conversation would go a little something like this. "God, today for the first time in my life I'm going to be completely honest and transparent with you. I've got a sin problem. I've tried to manage it. I've tried to cover it. I've tried to fix it and I can't. God, today I believe that Jesus Christ is the only one who can. God, I believe. I believe that Jesus Christ loved me so much that he was willing to be born on my behalf. He was willing to live a sinless life on my behalf. He was willing to pay the price for my sins on his cross. And God, I believe that when he rose from the dead three days later, he actually made it possible for my sins to be forgiven and my soul to be saved. God, today I don't have all the answers to the problems, the issues and the struggles of life but there's one thing I know, I know that Jesus Christ alone can take care of my sin problem. I'm asking you to forgive me. I'm asking you to save me. In the best way I know how, I just want to turn my life over to you."

With our heads still bowed and our eyes still closed, maybe you're that person today in this room, maybe even online, who for the very first time cried out and asked Jesus to save you. In a moment, I'm going to pray for us, then we're going to stand and sing. Can I just encourage you just to step out and step forward? We've got a whole team of folks that would love to celebrate, that would love to pray with you, pray for you. But maybe today you say, "Do you know what, pastor? I had that conversation years ago." In fact, many of you may remember your first grade Bible presentation decades ago, but in a few moments when you walk off these grounds, you're going to be barraged with problem and struggle after struggle. Maybe today it's not about stepping out and stepping forward, maybe it's about stepping out of here in a few moments saying, "Do you know what? Not everything I battle can be seen, touched or smelled." Maybe just maybe that deliverance you desire is by hitting your knees.

*Lord Jesus, as we come to this time of decision, thank you for those "many" in that verse, that if we're just willing to come to you and you alone, God, you will take care of whatever our struggle is. At this time, may we simply turn it over to you? It is in the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.*