

“A Day In the Life of Jesus”

Mark 1:29-39

Turn with me in your Bibles to the first chapter of Mark, and this morning we are going to look at verses 29-39. Time is one of the realities of life that is quite mysterious. When you're enjoying something, it seems like you never have enough of it, and when you're enduring something it seems like you have too much of it. When you're young, it seems like time creeps along, and when you're old it seems like it flies. And yet time still keeps right on ticking and stops for no one. There are 60 seconds in a minute, 60 minutes in an hour, 24 hours in a day, and 7 days in a week. Each of us have the same 24 hours in a given day, nobody gets 25. There have been those days in my life when I wished that I had an extra hour or two simply because of the demands of the day. Or, when you're on vacation somewhere and you wish that you could slow down time to enjoy it a bit longer. I have heard it said that what matters is not so much how many hours we put in, but it is what we put into the hours that makes the difference. I think it was the famous poet Henry David Thoreau who said, "No man can waste time without also injuring eternity."

Scripture says that each of us have a time to be born, and a time to die. In God's providence and wisdom, all of us came into the world at a fixed moment in time. Though your father and mother brought you into this world, God knew you even before you were born and saw to it that you entered the world. And just as sure as the day of your birth was on His calendar, so also will be the day of your death. There will be a fixed moment in time when we will take our final breath and step into eternity. In any given hospital at this very moment, one family gathers to welcome new life into the world, and another one gathers to pay their

final respects to a loved one. It is not that far of a walk from the nursery to the morgue. Death is an appointment that all of us will be on time for.

There is only so much time that a person has allotted. And after that time is up, we will stand before God.

Hebrews 9:27—“It is appointed unto man once to die, and after this, the judgment.”

Since this is true, shouldn't we make the most of our days? Every day is a gift from God, and so we had better make it count. It is with this thought in mind that I want us to turn our attention to this passage from the first chapter of Mark. What did a day in the life of Jesus consist of? What was it that He made priority? Let's read beginning in verse 29...

From verse 21 through verse 39 represents a full 24 hour period in the Lord's life. Mark could have easily titled this section of the chapter, "A Day In the Life of Jesus." The morning had started off with a trip to the local synagogue in Capernaum where Jesus taught the Scriptures. A man with an unclean spirit caused quite the scene, and Jesus cast the demon out of the man, leading all who were present to be amazed. News of the event quickly spread. From the synagogue, Jesus visits in the home of Simon Peter whose mother-in-law lay sick with a fever. Jesus simply takes her by the hand and the fever left her, in a display of His divine power. That same evening after sundown, Mark tells us that the whole city gathered at the door and Jesus healed the sick and cast out demons. This goes on into the night. And early the next morning, Jesus goes to a solitary place where He prays. It had been a full day, and yet it is simply one day in the life of Jesus.

Remember that Mark is an action gospel. His intention is to present Jesus as the Servant who has come to do the will of the Father. In these verses, Mark uses the little word ‘and’ approximately 36 times. So that when you read these verses, it almost leaves you out of breath:

- “And they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath...” (1:21)
- “And they were astonished at His teaching...” (1:22)
- “And immediately there was in the synagogue...” (1:23)
- “And the unclean spirit...came out of him.” (1:26)
- “And they were all amazed...” (1:27)
- “And at once His fame spread...” (1:28)
- “And immediately He left the synagogue and entered the house of Simon and Andrew...” (1:29)

And...and...and. You get the idea. The point that I want to make is that Mark shows us that His days were concerned with ministry to people, fellowship with the Father, and commitment to His mission. That’s what Jesus prioritized and practiced in His days. These three things ought to be characteristic of our days as well. Let’s look at each one of these, beginning with:

1—Ministry to the PEOPLE (1:29-34)

“And immediately He left the synagogue and entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon’s mother-in-law lay ill with a fever, and immediately they told Him about her. And He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and the fever left her, and she began to serve them. That evening at sundown they brought to Him all who were sick or oppressed by

demons. And the whole city was gathered together at the door. And He healed many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons. And He would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew Him.”

What a task the disciples had when they sat down to write their account of the life of Jesus! Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John did not attempt to be exhaustive but selective in their approach. It would be like you and me going on a trip together, and we would take different pictures and videos. You would see one thing, and I would see another. Each of us would see the same thing from a different angle. And so it would be the same trip, but each of us would look at it through different eyes. That's the way that it was with the gospels. It explains why Matthew may mention something with a certain amount of detail that Mark may mention in a few words. Or why Luke may write about something that John does not. Same places, same events, but with each one emphasizing certain details.

Here in Mark 1, we find the story of Jesus healing Peter's mother-in-law (Now, I can't prove it, but this might have something to do with why Peter later denied knowing Him!). This same story is found in Matthew 8:14-17 as well as in Luke 4:38-41. Mark and the other gospel writers explain how a crowd of people from Capernaum learn about what happen and they bring to Him the sick and those who are oppressed by demons. And in a powerful display of divine authority, He heals them. As the Servant, Jesus prioritized ministry to people. Everywhere He went, people came to Him in need of healing and deliverance. He ministered to both crowds as well as individuals. In these verses, Jesus enters into the home of Simon and immediately responds to the need manifested in the lives of people.

He ministers with personal compassion

Verse 30 says that Simon's mother-in-law lay ill with a fever which was a serious thing. It is important to note that they tell Him about her. He is not distant or mechanical—He draws near, takes her by the hand, and raises her up. This shows that Jesus' ministry is deeply personal. He sees the individual, cares about their suffering, and responds with tenderness. His power is not cold or detached. It is filled with compassion. And it ought to remind us that ministry is not just about crowds or platforms, but is about loving and serving other people one at a time.

A powerful illustration comes from the life of William Booth, the founder of The Salvation Army. Near the end of his life, Booth's health was failing and his eyesight was nearly gone. He was scheduled to speak at a large gathering but was too weak to attend. Instead, he sent a telegram to be read to the crowd. The message contained just one word: "Others." That single word captured the entire focus of his life and ministry. Booth had spent his life serving the poor, the outcast, and the forgotten—not for recognition, but for the sake of others. This same word, "Others," was written on his tombstone.

I think that if we were to sum up the ministry of Jesus in a single word, Mark would use the word 'others.' That word perfectly illustrates the example of Jesus here. He moves from one person (Peter's mother-in-law) to the crowds of people at the door, always oriented toward others. His ministry was never self-serving but self-giving.

He ministers with powerful authority

Jesus performed miracles as an act of divine power and authority. The authority of Jesus is displayed as proof of His deity. It is seen in the way He teaches the Scriptures, the way in which He commands evil spirits, and the way in which He

heals the sick. If He is to be the Savior of the world, then He has to be able to rescue people from sin and Satan. If He is going to raise men and women to resurrection life, He must have power over the effects of the curse on the body. In other words, He must have power over the physical and spiritual effects of the fall. When Adam sinned, the whole human race was affected. Sin brought about a curse, we all bear the results of that curse, both spiritually and physically.

In Matthew's account of this same story, there is a quote from Isaiah which described the Servant's ministry:

Matthew 8:16-17—“That evening they brought to Him many who were oppressed by demons, and He cast out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick. This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: ‘He took our illnesses and bore our diseases.’”

The Savior of the world has to rescue us from the effects of the curse in the spiritual realm, as well as in the physical realm. And that is why when Jesus came, He showed His power over the spiritual realm by casting out demons so that it would be clear that He has control over the spiritual realm. And He healed sickness and disease to show that He has power over the physical effects of the curse and will one day give us a resurrected body fit for heaven's glory.

And so when we go through the ministry of Jesus here in the gospels, we constantly see Him healing diseases and casting out demons. It demonstrates His power over both the physical and spiritual realms, both of which had been devastated by the fall. In this very brief summary of just a day in His life, Mark tells us about countless healings and deliverances that occurred in that one day.

Jesus takes her by the hand and the fever left her, so that she is made completely well by the power of Jesus. In Luke's account of this same story, the

healing is described as Jesus ‘rebuking’ the fever. It is the same word used by Mark in the previous passage where Jesus ‘rebuked’ the unclean spirit. Jesus teaches the Scriptures with authority, He commands the spirits with authority, and He even heals the sick with authority! “Go away, fever!” That’s some kind of power when even a fever obeys, when all the symptoms of the fever disappear. Jesus has complete authority over the spiritual world and complete authority over the physical world. He speaks a word and there is instant compliance.

What is it that happens upon her being healed? Verse 31 says, “She began to serve them.”

“Serve” — *the word is ‘διακονέω’ and means to minister*

She began to serve them, to minister to them. She got up and made everyone something to eat. Her fever was gone, all the symptoms were gone. Now, you know if you’ve had a fever for any length of time, even when your temperature starts to come down, you feel weak. You don’t want to do anything, don’t want to eat anything but soup or something. But she had no weakness, no struggle. All her symptoms were gone and it was as if she had never even been sick! Instead of lying down, she gets up and serves. It is a good picture of what happens to people who’ve been touched by the Lord Jesus.

Mark 9:35— “If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all.”

And He will later say, “For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.” Think of how we’ve already seen Him serving in this first chapter alone—preaching the Word, casting out unclean spirits, healing the sick. All of this merely points to the ultimate way in

which He has come to serve which is to pay for our sins by dying in our place on the cross.

2—Fellowship with the FATHER (1:35)

“And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, He departed and went out to a desolate place, and there He prayed.”

Not only did Jesus prioritize ministry to people, but notice how He prioritizes fellowship with His Father. In the midst of what had been a busy 24 hour period, Jesus made time for the Father. Notice that it involved:

Unhurried prayer

Early in the morning, after having been with people late the night before, Jesus is out praying. Verse 35 says it was “Very early in the morning...He went out.” It was after an exhausting day of ministry, a day in which He had constantly been surrounded by people, a day where many demands had been placed upon Him. Yet Jesus still rises early to pray. He got up “very early... while it was still dark” and withdrew to a solitary place, which speaks of intention. He chose a time when interruptions would be minimal. He chose a place of seclusion, removing Himself from the noise, the crowds, and even the expectations of His disciples. This wasn’t hurried, distracted praying. It was focused communion.

Throughout the gospels, Jesus repeats this pattern. Jesus often withdrew from busy ministry seasons to be alone with the Father, even when demands were high and opportunities were great. He didn’t allow urgency in ministry to replace intimacy with God. In fact, the greater the pressure, the more intentional He was about stepping away. This shows that prayer was not an afterthought with Jesus. Rather, it was a priority that shaped everything else. His unhurried time with the

Father gave Him clarity, strength, and direction, enabling Him to respond to life not reactively, but purposefully. Fellowship with the Father wasn't squeezed into His schedule. Rather, it shaped His schedule.

If Jesus prioritized prayer despite overwhelming demands, then we cannot treat it as optional. Jesus lived a God-centered life! He deliberately removed Himself from distractions. Prayer often requires stepping away from all the noise.

Unrelenting need

Verse 36 says that the disciples were searching for Jesus and when they find Him, they say, "Everyone is looking for You." Which means it would be another day filled with the same need. More sick people to minister to, more demons to cast out, more needs to be met. Have you ever heard this expression—"Same old stuff, just a different day?" We all feel this frustration from time to time.

Maybe you walk into the kitchen and the sink is full of dishes, so you roll up your sleeves, clean them, and put them away. You walk into the kitchen the next morning, and what is there? Dirty dishes! The laundry basket is overflowing with clothes, so you throw them in the washing machine, then the dryer, and then you fold them and put them away. You walk into your closet and what do you see? Clothes piled high in the laundry basket.

There are always more bills to pay, more emails to return, more grass to mow, more work to be done until our brief time on earth is done. Without God at the center of it, life seems like monotony to be endured. But with God at the center, life is seen as a gift to be enjoyed, something for which we are to be grateful.

That is quite an alternative, isn't it?

Solomon explains this in the book of Ecclesiastes where he talks about life under the sun:

Ecclesiastes 3:13—“Everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in his toil—this is God’s gift to man.”

Ecclesiastes 5:18—“Behold, what I have seen to be good and fitting is to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of his life that God has given.”

Notice he refers to the ‘few days’ of life that God has given. That’s why we had better not waste it. James says:

James 4:14—“What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes.”

The words of a poem express it well:

Life is just a minute—only 60 seconds in it.

Forced upon you—can’t refuse it.

Didn’t seek it—didn’t choose it.

But it’s up to you to use it.

You must suffer if you lose it.

Give an account if you abuse it.

Just a tiny, little minute,

But eternity is in it!

Solomon shows us how life is meaningful when you and I begin to see things from God’s perspective. The message is not that nothing matters, but that everything does. Under the sun, life is vanity. But above the sun, life is infused with meaning and purpose! That’s the difference that a God-centered outlook on life makes. But without prayer, we become distracted and disillusioned. That’s why Paul could say:

1 Corinthians 15:58—“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.”

The secret is found in that little phrase ‘in the Lord.’ Jesus is abounding in the work of the Lord, and His labor is not in vain. Though He was fully God, He was also fully man. It was in His humanity that He drew strength from time spent in fellowship with the Father, thereby setting an example for you and me. Friends, there will always be those demands on our schedules. What matters is that our life is centered around time spent in fellowship with Jesus Christ. He is our strength! Because of unrelenting need in our life, you and I must give ourselves to unhurried prayer.

What did this day in the life of Jesus consist of? Ministry to people, fellowship with the Father. And then notice:

3—Commitment to the MISSION (1:36-39)

“And Simon and those who were with Him searched for Him, and they found Him and said to Him, ‘Everyone is looking for You.’ And 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.’ And He went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons.”

While Jesus is in that solitary place praying, the disciples begin searching for Him. The language suggests urgency, maybe even a sense of agitation. When they finally find Him, they say, “Everyone is looking for You.” It reflects the growing popularity of Jesus. The crowds are increasing, the demand is rising. From a human perspective, this is the moment to capitalize on success. The opportunity seems obvious. Stay here, build a following, establish influence!

But Jesus does not respond the way we might expect. He says, “Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out.” So that with those words, Jesus reveals the driving force of His life which was His mission. He is not governed by popularity. He is not controlled by the expectations of others. He is not even swayed by the apparent success of what is happening in Capernaum. He is guided by purpose. He says, “Let’s go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out.” Jesus knows exactly why He has come and that purpose shapes the decision He makes.

He did not come merely to heal the sick, though He did. He did not come merely to cast out demons, though He had authority over them. He came to preach, to proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God. The miracles draw attention, but the message brings salvation!

And so He refuses to remain where He is most popular in order to go where He is most needed. He moves on to the next towns, carrying the message of the gospel with Him. There’s a powerful lesson here for us about the pressure of expectations. The disciples see the crowds and interpret them as an opportunity to stay. But Jesus sees the same situation and recognizes the need to move forward. If He had allowed Himself to be governed by the expectations of others, He would have deviated from His mission. It would have been a distraction.

And the same is true for us. Friends, if we’re not grounded in God’s purpose for our lives, then we will be pulled in a thousand different directions by the pressures, demands, and expectations of people. I like what one person says:

Gordon MacDonald — *“Not everything that cries the loudest is the most urgent.”*

A good illustration of this is found in Luke 10:38-42 and the story of Mary and Martha. When Jesus visited their home, Martha immediately became busy with preparations. The needs felt urgent—food had to be prepared, guests had to be served. Everything in Martha’s world was begging for attention. Meanwhile, Mary sat at Jesus’ feet, listening to His word. And from Martha’s perspective, the situation was obvious: her sister was neglecting what matters most. The work was piling up. The responsibility was immediate. And so Martha comes to Jesus, essentially saying, “Lord, make her help me!” But Jesus says that Mary has chosen “the good portion,” which will not be taken away from her. In other words, what felt most urgent was not actually most important. The noise of responsibility, the pressure of expectation, and the immediacy of tasks were all crying out loud—but they were not the highest priority in that moment. Sitting at the feet of Jesus, listening to His word, that is what was most important.

That’s the same principle that we see here in Mark 1. The loudest demands are not always the deepest needs. In life, there will always be ‘Martha moments’—emails to answer, responsibilities to meet, people making demands, expectations pressing in. They feel urgent because they are loud and immediate. But time spent with God, listening to His Word, cultivating fellowship with Him, this is what’s most needed. That’s exactly what Jesus models. The crowds were demanding and their needs were real. But He steps away to pray because He understood what mattered most. Though the need is still there, He has work to do.

Busy days, crowded schedules, and time keeps ticking!

Psalm 90:12—“So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.”

If you're not careful, your life will be dominated by what screams the loudest rather than what matters the most. We must learn to choose the 'better portion,' even when everything else is demanding your attention. Jesus knew that prayer must precede preaching so that preaching will be supplied with power. He says, "Let's go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also." This gives us a clue as to what Jesus had been praying about. He prayed for open doors and open hearts in the places He would go next.

Jesus said, "Let's go to those who are in other places." If we are not careful, we can build our own little world and forget that down the street, there are lost people who have never heard the name of Jesus Christ or the gospel of His grace. I think we ought to slow down in the midst of our busy lives to make sure our days consist of ministry to people, fellowship with God, and commitment to the mission. We need to remember that the Christian life isn't supposed to be lived in isolation from the world. May God remind us over and over to take what we receive from Him and share it with the world around us. Here is a passage in which people are confronted with impossible situations, yet into those situations steps Jesus.

Impossible situations! That may describe your life today. It is likely that more of us are facing our share of what we call impossible situations than we let on. To be sure, we like to put on a tough exterior. But the reality is that an impossible situation is indeed just that. You can't fix it. You can't heal it. You can't change it. Which is why we need the power of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that's what Mark is writing about in this first chapter. He has all authority. There is nothing too difficult for Him. He can do whatever He wills whenever He chooses, always within His plan and purpose, for His glory and our good.

Let me close with something that I read this week that I think you will find to be very helpful. Listen to this:

Charles Swindoll — *“When we consider the power of Jesus, we’re talking about divine power, supernatural power. He, being undiminished deity, possesses all the attributes that are true of God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. The word for divine power is ‘omnipotent,’ from the Latin word meaning ‘all powerful.’ His divine power represents the ability to do anything that is according to His will, at any time that fits into His ultimate plan and purpose. No obstacle is insurmountable, no equation is impossible, no situation is unapproachable, no person is unchangeable, and no problem is unsolvable. Should it be His will, He is able to heal any sickness and disease, stop any addiction, relieve any physical challenge, emotional damage, and mental disorder. When He does not do so, it isn’t because He lacks the power, but because it isn’t His will. Nothing that kicks against His will poses a barrier. No force can resist what He wants accomplished whenever He wishes it so. No enemy is a threat, no being (human or demonic) can withstand His sovereign control, or alter His perfect will. The power of Jesus is unlimited, independent, absolute, and authoritative. Though it is often invisible, it is always invincible. When it is displayed among us, it occasionally reveals itself in the form of a miracle. In spite of popular opinion, divine miracles are extremely rare in our day, though they still do take place. When they do, almost without exception the results are immediate, complete, phenomenal, unexpected, and inexplicable. His timing is not linked to our clock or our calendar, and His plan is not based on our logic. His reasons, more often than not, are unsearchable. His strength is inexhaustible, the depths of His ways are unfathomable, and the breadth of His magnificent greatness is incomprehensible. In addition to these characteristics of His undiminished deity, Jesus remains true*

humanity. Which means that while all powerful, He is still ever compassionate and always concerned over our weaknesses, ready to forgive us as He shows us mercy and deals with us in grace. In light of this meager attempt to define His power, it is no wonder I urge each of us to reserve one word in our vocabulary for God and God alone—awesome.”