

Mark 1:35-45:

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. 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. ...

And a leper came to him, imploring him, and kneeling said to him, "If you will, you can make me clean." Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand and touched him and said to him, "I will; be clean." And immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean. ...

And Jesus sternly charged him and sent him away at once, and said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, for a proof to them." But he went out and began to talk freely about it, and to spread the news, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter a town, but was out in desolate places, and people were coming to him from every quarter.

- Mark 1:35-45

"...Everyone is looking for you." - Mark 1:37

If you are here today "looking for Jesus" because you have needs:

1. Jesus may disappoint you (verses 35-39).
2. This doesn't mean He does not care about you (verses 40-42).
3. In light of the gospel, you are called to trust and obey (verses 43-45).

If you are here today "looking for Jesus" because you have needs:

1. **Jesus may disappoint you (verses 35-39).**

Verses 35-39:

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.

36 And *Simon and those who were with him* searched for him,

37 and they found him and said to him, “**Everyone is looking for you.**”

38 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.”

39 And he went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons. ...

Notice: Jesus disappoints everyone “who has been looking for” him.

If you are disappointed, you may have confused your agenda with Jesus’ agenda. Jesus is not about meeting your agenda but following his Father’s agenda.

Thoughts and Takeaways:

1) When you have confused your agenda with Jesus’ agenda, you will be either “mad or sad.”

James Edwards: “The Greek word behind ‘looking for’ occurs 10 times in Mark, and in each instance it carries negative connotations...it connotes an attempt to determine and control rather than submit and follow.”

Thoughts and Takeaways:

2) While we might not know exactly what Jesus’ agenda might be for our specific need, we can be sure that it will not be to feed or fuel our idols. Jesus wants to free you from these idols!

Thoughts and Takeaways:

3) If you're struggling with letting go of your agenda...

Corrie Ten Boom: "Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God."

Thomas Brooks: "Our safety and security lie not in our weak holding upon Christ, but in Christ's holding us fast in His everlasting arms."

One more thought - Thoughts and Takeaways:

4) One way God aligns our agenda with His is through prayer.

Verse 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.

If you are here today "looking for Jesus" because you have needs:

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2. **This doesn't mean He does not care about you (verses 40-42).**

Verses 40-42:

40 (Mark gives no transition) And a leper came to him, imploring him, and kneeling said to him, "If you will, you can make me clean."

41 Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand and touched him and said to him, "I will; be clean."

42 And immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean.

Thoughts and Takeaways:

1. **Leprosy was a big deal, and this engagement was "a highly provocative and offensive encounter." (Edwards)**

James Edwards: "Lepers were victims of far more than the disease itself. The disease robbed them of their health, and the sentence imposed on them as a consequence robbed them of their name, occupation, habits, family and fellowship, and worshipping community. To ensure against contact with society, lepers were required to make their appearance as repugnant as possible. Josephus speaks of the banishment of lepers as those 'in no way differing from a corpse (the living dead).'"

- Lepers had to stand at a distance of 50 paces
- Bell around their neck as a warning, shouting "Leper!"

Thoughts and Takeaways:

2. Jesus' response to this leper reflects his deep care:

- *"Moved with pity"*

- a) Splanchna: bowels, guts, core being
- b) Jason Meyer: "Jesus is portrayed as compassionate to the core. The man with leprosy would have turned the stomachs of others with disgust, but he turned the stomach of Jesus with love."

Thoughts/Takeaways:

2. Jesus' response to this leper reflects his deep care:

- *"He stretched out his hand and touched him"*

- a) This was probably the first human touch this man had received in years.

Thoughts/Takeaways:

2. Jesus' response to this leper reflects his deep care:

- *"I am willing"*

- a) Jesus is not only able but desirous, even knowing the mixed intentions and imperfections of this man and what his response was going to be in just a moment.



Some of you might be thinking,

"Jesus cared for this person (leper) and that's why He met his needs. But Jesus is not meeting my needs, so He must not care about me."

If you find yourself struggling with his care for you:

1) Just because Jesus is not meeting your needs does not mean that He does not care.

God's "no" to Jesus:

Matthew 26:39: And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will."

If you find yourself struggling with his care for you:

2) Distinguish between request and need.

God's "no" to the Apostle Paul:

2 Corinthians 12:8-9: Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

If you find yourself struggling with his care for you:

3) God's "no" can be a way to help you differentiate your agenda from His.

"A 'no' doesn't mean God doesn't hear or care about our prayers; it simply means He has a different plan."

- Unknown

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3. In light of the gospel, you are called to trust and obey (verses 43-45).

Verses 43-45:

43 And Jesus sternly charged him and sent him away at once,

44 and said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, for a proof to them."

45 But he went out and began to talk freely about it, and to spread the news, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter a town, but was out in desolate places, and people were coming to him from every quarter.

As you listen to this, you might be thinking:

"This is jarring. We just read about Jesus' deep compassion and care, why is He so intense and harsh in commanding this man to not saying anything about what just happened? How do we make sense of 'caring Jesus' and 'intense Jesus'?"

1) Jesus' authority is not contrary but complementary to his care. He is both the Lion and the Lamb.

CS Lewis: The Chronicles of Narnia (Aslan):

"Safe?...Who said anything about safe? Course he isn't safe. But he's good. He's the King I tell you."

"He'll be coming and going...One day you'll see him and another you won't. He doesn't like being tied down...He'll often drop in. Only you mustn't press him. He's wild, you know. Not like a tame lion."

2) The "Silence Motif" in the Gospel of Mark (Why Jesus was constantly mentioning to people to not say anything about what He did)

a. **"Word spreading" with the crowds was not advancing the gospel but actually preventing it from moving forward!**

Michael Card: "The best of Jesus' call to preach the good news is being eclipsed by the good of his ability to heal."

2) The "Silence Motif" in the Gospel of Mark (why Jesus was constantly mentioning to people to not say anything about what He did)

b. **Mark's intent: Upon Jesus' death on the cross, the Centurion exclaims, "Truly this man was the Son of God!" (Mark 15:39)**

Key point: Without the full story of the cross and salvation, you will have the wrong story about Jesus and tell the wrong story about Jesus!

Thoughts and Takeaways:

1. **Mark's recording of the healed leper's disobedience should sober us.**

After Jesus sternly warns him not to say anything, we are told in verse 45: "But he went out and began to talk freely about it, and to spread the news, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter a town, but was out in desolate places, and people were coming to him from every quarter."

James Edwards: "Whether the man followed the prescribed rite of cleansing we are not told. What we are told is that he broke Jesus' command...After he has been healed by Jesus, the leper's earnestness and humility (1:40) turn to complacency, even disregard."

Thoughts and Takeaways:

1. **Mark's recording of the healed leper's disobedience should sober us.**

2. **As we are called to trust Jesus and obey, the gospel addresses both our obedience and disobedience.**

Closing: If you are here today “looking for Jesus” because you have needs:

1. Jesus may disappoint you.
2. This doesn't mean He does not care about you.
3. In light of the gospel, you are called to trust and obey.

