

# With Christ, the Compassion of God Is *Here*

Mark 1:29-34

Halifax: 18 November 2018, 10:30 AM

## Introduction

Today, we will continue our sermon series in the gospel of Mark.

- Today, we will be looking at Mark 1:29-34 where we will see that with Christ, the compassion of God is here.

If you were here last week, perhaps you will remember what we are focusing on in this part of Mark's Gospel.

- Mark has presented Jesus to us, the readers, as the Son of God who came to establish God's kingdom in this world—a kingdom where people are restored to God.
  - By coming here as the Son of God in human flesh, He connects us with God from whom we have been estranged by sin.
  - He is the perfect mediator between God and man.
    - As man, He is the One who lives to God the Father the way we ought to have always lived to Him. He restores the relations between God and man.
    - And as God, He makes God accessible to us so that we can know God and be re-connected to God as the source of life and blessing.

Last week, we saw that *With Christ, the Authority of God Is Here*.

- Sin has separated us from God's authority as creatures—made us strangers to His authority as something we respond to.
  - His call on our lives, His will, His commandments and promises are not received with authority until we meet Jesus the Mediator.
    - God's word simply does not impact us as it should...it doesn't carry the weight with us that belongs to it...
    - It is part of the curse that it does not—that we are estranged from Him.
  - But with Jesus our Mediator, the authority of God's Word strikes us.
    - In Mark 1:21-22, we saw the people in the synagogue at Capernaum were astonished when Jesus preached to them because of the authority with which He spoke.
      - The word *astonished* means to strike with a blow...
    - Through Jesus the Mediator, they had God speaking to them—with all the wonderful authority that is His—the word gripping them as it should.
      - To some it was repulsive—they wanted to run away.
        - But to others it was attractive—they wanted to come near with fear and reverence to see what God said to them.
      - When we hear His voice today, we receive the scriptures as the word of God and we act accordingly...
        - We believe what they say about our sin and its punishment, so we repent of our sins and come to God with fear.
        - And we also believe what they say about Christ and His cross and the forgiveness that comes to all who believe, and we trust Him to save us.

- Last week, we also saw (in Mark 1:23-28) that Jesus brought the authority of God among us in a second way—by restoring the rule of God among us.
  - Now of course God rules over all, but since the fall we have not been under His rule in the sense of obeying Him as our God.
    - Some people are even possessed with demons—and all of us are under the dominion of Satan until Jesus sets us free.
    - By casting out demons when He was here, Jesus showed us that as mediator, He has the authority to destroy Satan and his works and bring us under God’s rule again.
- So you see what I mean when I say that Jesus, by His coming as God and man, brings God’s authority to us so we can re-connect with God as our God—
  - We should have come away last week:
    - Praising God for His authority as revealed in Christ at Capernaum.
    - Submitting to His word as our authority in both faith and obedience.
    - Trusting in Him as the one who has authority over Satan...
    - With Christ the mediator, the authority of God in here.
- I told you that our future sermons in this part of Mark will look like this:
  - Mark 1:29-34: With Christ, the Compassion of God Is *Here*.
  - Mark 1:35-39: With Christ, the Agenda of God Is *Here*.
  - Mark 1:40-45: With Christ, the Willingness of God to Save Is *Here*.
  - Mark 2:1-17: With Christ, the Forgiveness of God Is *Here*.
  - Mark 2:18-22: With Christ, the Presence of God Is *Here*.
  - Mark 2:23-28: With Christ, the Sabbath Rest of God Is *Here*.

Our scripture reading today is from Mark 1:29-34.

- Please listen carefully as this is the very word of God.

**Mark 1:29-34:** Now as soon as they had come out of the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. <sup>30</sup> But Simon’s wife’s mother lay sick with a fever, and they told Him about her at once. <sup>31</sup> So He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and immediately the fever left her. And she served them. <sup>32</sup>

At evening, when the sun had set, they brought to Him all who were sick and those who were demon-possessed. <sup>33</sup> And the whole city was gathered together at the door. <sup>34</sup> Then He healed many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and He did not allow the demons to speak, because they knew Him.

May the Lord bless the reading of His holy and infallible Word.

## **I. Here we see the compassion of God among us in Jesus our Mediator.**

A. In Jesus we see what God is like when it comes to our infirmities.

1. Here Jesus goes to Peter’s home.

- Immediately, He is told that Peter’s mother-in-law is sick with a fever.
- Immediately He goes to her and completely heals her so that she is able to serve—she immediately recovers her full strength.
- And then the whole town of Capernaum brings their sick and their demon-possessed and Jesus has compassion on them and heals them all.
  - It is understood by most expositors that when it says that He healed *many*, it means that He healed *all* who were brought to Him.

2. What we see here was consistent throughout His ministry.
    - When He was present, all who came to Him with sickness were healed.
      - There is not a single case in which someone is brought to Him for healing and they are not healed.
      - At every funeral that He attended of which we have record, the dead were raised again.
- B. By doing this when He was among us, the Son of God reminds us what God is like... that He is a compassionate God to all.
1. He cares for all His creatures.
    - It is His way to constantly bless them and to fill their lives with good things.
    - It is His way to busy Himself with making them happy, loving them and delighting in them.
    - His compassions are like a flowing river of mercy that never ceases.
    - Our God is kind through and through.
- But if this is so... why don't we experience Him in this way?
2. We do not experience Him this way because of our fall into sin.
    - Our sin has separated us from His constant compassion that we would have otherwise enjoyed forever.
      - a. The fall was our rejecting of Him.
        - By turning away from God, we no longer sought Him as the source of all good things... we stopped "asking" and relying on Him as we had before.
          - The flow of His care did not cease entirely, for we still have our daily bread, but it ceased to flow as fully and as constantly as before.
          - Now we get sick, now we have birth defects, now we have death.
        - It is noteworthy that even when Jesus was here, the ones He healed were the ones who either came or who were brought to Him for healing.
          - If they did not come to Him, He did not heal them.
          - When He went to Nazareth and was rejected there, we are told that He did not do many miracles because of their unbelief—they did not ask.
      - b. The fall also caused Him to reject us.
        - Justice demanded that we should be expelled from the garden.
          - And not just that, but rejecting our Maker called for the sentence of death, physical death and eternal condemnation—everlasting punishment.
          - It is no light matter to reject your Creator—
            - Whatever you may think about it—it is a crime of infinite proportions—worse than even the most nefarious sins we commit in this world.
        - So immediately, Adam and Eve and all their posterity (the whole human race) were cast from the garden or paradise as God-rejecters.
          - Even those that God intended to redeem needed to feel the estrangement from Him, to experience sickness and all kinds of infirmities.
            - Without these, we would never face our sin and see our need of Christ.
            - What David says of himself in Psalm 119:67 is true of all of us: **Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep Your word.**

- This, I might add, is the reason that Jesus did not put an end to all sickness and infirmity when He came.
- He told us that we would have much tribulation in this world.
- It was not His intention when He came to take it all away—not yet.

➤ Rather...

3. It was His intention when He came to earth to show us what restoration will ultimately look like in glory.
  - It will involve restoring His authority among us, as we saw last week...
    - And it will involve restoring His compassion to us as we are seeing this week... in future sermons, we will look at other ways He brings us to the Father...
  - But with compassion, the point is that by healing everyone, Jesus is showing us what it will be like in glory when we are restored to the Father in Him.
    - He will banish all sickness and all our infirmities will be healed.
    - We will be, as the city of Capernaum was while He was there, those who are living in the constant stream of His compassion.
    - We will be in His presence and there will be no sickness or death.
      - That is simply the way God is toward His creatures—unless they have made themselves obnoxious to Him by their sins as we have.
      - He delights in showing us compassion—in constantly caring for us.
        - That is what we have to look forward to in glory.
        - That is what Jesus showed us about God as the Son of God when He came to earth for a time.

## **II. But how are we to come to Jesus now (now that He is not on earth) if we want to be connected to the God of compassion?**

- A. Obviously, you cannot come to Him the way they did when He was here on earth.
  1. Then you could travel to wherever He was and ask Him to have compassion on you or on those that you loved.
    - But now He is ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father in heaven.
    - There are no buses or even space shuttles that can take you there.
  2. What good is it to us that He brought the compassion of God among us if we cannot get to Him?
    - Christians often have just as many infirmities as anyone else.
      - We get sick, our children get sick, we die, we have infirmities of all kinds.
      - No one can claim that we are in the stream of God's mercy now so as to have no sickness or infirmity—it is undeniable that we all die.
    - If He came to make God accessible to us in this way of compassion, what good is it if Jesus is no longer accessible to us—if we can't get to Him?
      - How does the revelation of Jesus help us now?
      - How can we come to Him when He is not here—even for future blessing?

- B. Until Jesus returns, you are to come to Him as the mediator by faith... you cannot come physically, but you can come spiritually.
1. That means that you should come to Him by prayer, believing Him to be all that He has promised to be in the Bible.
    - Know that He will receive you as soon as you come, and afterward will bring you to glory.
    - You need to be patient because it is necessary for us to suffer as long as we are in this world.
  2. When you come to Him by faith, you should praise Him as the compassionate God and trust Him as such.
    - a. You can ask Him, by prayer, to heal you and to relieve you from your infirmities... and very often He will.
      - When He does, give thanks to Him as the one who has done this for you, even if doctors and medicine are used.
        - Ask Him for your daily bread, and when you receive it, give thanks to Him as the one who gave it to you.
      - You will say, yes, but people who do not know Jesus or pray to God get well when they are sick and they have food too.
        - Yes they do—and it is very sad because they do not know God as the God of all compassion because they don't know Christ the Mediator.
        - He is the One who shows us the Father... He shows us what God is like toward all who are not under condemnation—
      - You have the privilege of being in fellowship with the living God who is the one who makes you well whenever you get well and who gives you your food whenever you have food.
        - You are restored to Him as the God of compassion and for you, these blessings are a reminder of His compassionate character and but a foretaste of the blessing you will receive when all things are restored.
    - b. You can also be certain that even when He does not answer you and heal you, His compassions toward you have not failed.
      - In Christ, the relationship with your compassionate God is settled forever—it is intact and nothing can destroy it.
        - You can be sure that He has not left you to suffer in your infirmities without a reason.
        - Your suffering is necessary or He would remove it as He will at the last day when you will experience the constant flow of His mercy.
      - And not only that, but all the while you are afflicted, you can be sure that as the God of compassion, He is afflicted with you.
        - Hebrews 4:15 says: **For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as we are, yet without sin.**
        - In all your affliction, you have this faithful Mediator to care for you... you have God Himself to care for you until He receives you in glory.

3. So you see that in the present time, we walk by faith and not by sight—
  - We walk by what is revealed to us of Christ in His word rather than what we experience now.
  - I mean, yes, we delight in the compassions we do experience now,
    - but the reason we delight in them is because of our faith... that through Christ we have been reconciled to the God of compassion and that we will experience Him in the fullness of His mercy when Jesus returns.
    - Like Abraham, we look for the city that is to come.

TRANS> And now let me exhort you to learn something from our text.

### **III. Learn from our text to welcome our compassionate Lord into your lives and your homes.**

A. First, learn from Simon Peter to bring Him home from church.

- You see what it says in verse 29: **Now as soon as they had come out of the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.**
1. We actually have an advantage in getting Him to come home with us.
    - When Peter brought Him home, he had the advantage of being able to see Him and physically bring Him into his house.
      - But you have the advantage that Jesus spoke about in John that now that He has gone to glory, He comes to us in a spiritual way.
      - That means that all of you can welcome Him into your homes every week and ask Him to stay with you all week.
  2. How can you do this?
    - There are a number of ways.
      - a. You can ask Him to abide with you and with your family and to be present among you in your home.
      - b. You can invite His people to your home through the week and show kindness to them because Jesus said that what you do for His brothers and sisters, you do for Him.
      - c. You can also invite Him by engaging in the means of grace at home—open the scriptures and read them in your home—lift up praise to Him by singing at home—offer up prayers of supplication and thanksgiving.
  3. Is Christ indeed welcome in your home?
    - Do you abide with Him and does He abide with you?
    - Do you live in a way that is conducive to having Him as your honoured guest or do you live in ways that are contrary to Him without even bothering to ask Him for forgiveness?

TRANS> So that is the first thing we learn from Peter here—don't leave Him at the synagogue—bring Him home with you to stay with you all week.

B. The second thing you learn from Peter is to go to Him with your cares.

1. Peter's mother-in-law was sick, and you see that immediately they told Jesus.
  - Verse 30: **But Simon's wife's mother lay sick with a fever, and they told Him about her at once.**

- It would make no sense to have Jesus with you and not to tell Him of your needs and your problems when you know that He is compassionate.
    - This very passage teaches you that He is.
    - So learn to go to Him.
2. Peter himself tells you in his epistle (in 1 Peter 5:7) to cast all your care upon Him because He cares for you.
    - Pray with and for each other in the home—when there is sickness and infirmity.
      - Know that He cares.
      - Know that He will do what is good, and that if it is best will heal and restore.
      - Know that in the resurrection if not before your prayer for healing will be heard.
      - Know this because Jesus has revealed to you that God is a compassionate God.
  3. How foolish it would be to have Him near and to never tell Him of your burdens and concerns.
    - It can be sickness, temptation, broken relationships, injury, fear, poverty, perplexity...
      - whatever it is—bring it to Him and He will care.
- C. The third thing that we learn here in our text is that when Jesus is in our homes, He will heal the members of our household.
1. We have already seen in verse 31 what He did...
    - **Verse 31: So He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and immediately the fever left her. And she served them.**
      - a. What power there is in His mere touch!
        - He simply takes her by the hand and lifts her up.
        - His touch can put an end to all your infirmities—and it will—either now or in glory—it will.
      - b. And then immediately, she begins to serve.
        - She did not have to go through a period of recovering her strength.
        - Jesus’s healing was so complete that she was able to serve Him and those in the home right away.
  2. This is how it will be in your home for you and your children.
    - When Jesus is there, He will bring healing to your children.
      - He is compassionate, so call upon Him when your children are not serving Him.
        - This is the best thing you can do for them.
        - Soon they will be up serving others the way Peter’s mother-in-law was.
    - Even though we are not in the immediate presence of Jesus, He is compassionate toward us when it comes to enabling us to serve.
      - Unlike when Jesus was physically with us, we may still have our sickness and our infirmity if He thinks it best, but He will still enable us to serve when we come to Him and ask.

- It may be that our service will be offering up prayers in our hearts when we are lying on a sick bed about to die and unable to speak—
  - but once we spiritually connect with the God of compassion, Jesus our mediator, we will serve.
- And all the while we will know that the day will come when all our bodily infirmities will be taken away and then we will serve each other and serve Christ without the hindrance of these infirmities.

TRANS> What a blessing it is to have our compassionate God and Mediator in our homes.

- Do not drive Him away.
- Always welcome Him and you will know blessing for your whole family.
- But that is not all.

D. We also learn from Peter that when Jesus is there, our homes will be a place of healing for outsiders.

1. Because Jesus was there, the whole city of Capernaum came to Peter's house with their sick and their demon-possessed.
  - As soon as the sun had set and the Sabbath had ended, they made their way to this house for one reason—because Jesus was there.
  - They knew that He was compassionate and powerful and that if they could only see Him, He would heal them and their sick relations.
  - Capernaum did not need any doctors the following day.
2. What a blessing it is to help people like this!
  - You may not even know it many times, but if Jesus is with you, so many people will be helped just by having them in your home...
    - burdens that have been long carried or burdens that have just come to rest on them will be lifted.
    - Yours will be a place of blessing and healing as people meet the God of compassion there—
  - Just think of it, through Jesus as Mediator, they will be connected to the ever flowing stream of mercy and compassion that flows to His saints.
    - It is a river of compassion that will never cease, that will always bless, and that will come to rich completion when we see Jesus.

**Conclusion:** What a terrible thing it is that we have been cut off from the God of compassion and this ever flowing river of kindness,

- But what a marvellous thing that through Christ the Mediator, we can be joined again to our God.
  - Jesus Himself is able to do this, not only because He is God and man, but because as God and man, He went to the cross to bear our sins.
    - That is His greatest act of compassion.
  - He did this so that we might be pardoned and come to God... and be reconnected to Him—to His authority and His compassion and all that God is to those whose sin has been taken away.