

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Mark: Jesus, The Perfect Servant Of God

Part II: The Perfect Service Of Jesus, The Perfect Servant Of God, Mark 1:1-10:52

E. Christ's Priority Of Showing Compassion To A Needy Person Over His Discipling Plan (Mark 1:40-45)

I. Introduction

- A. We learned in our first lesson in this series that Mark's Gospel presents the perfect service of God's Perfect Servant, Jesus, with Mark's focus of having rebounded unto upright Christian service from personal failure.
- B. At times such failure arises from letting our discipling plan take precedence over individuals who need our compassion, but Mark 1:40-45 in its context reports Christ countered this lure, and we view it for our insight:

II. Christ's Priority Of Showing Compassion To A Needy Person Over His Discipling Plan, Mark 1:40-45.

- A. John Mark, the author of Mark's Gospel, failed in the first missionary trip of Paul and Barnabas due to difficult experiences of some kind so that he returned to his mother's home in Jerusalem from southern Turkey (Acts 13:1-13; 12:12), and that departure left him failing to show compassion on millions of souls in that land for whom God had expressed so much love that He had sent His Son to die on the cross to save, John 3:16.
- B. When Mark overcame his defeat to become a profitable servant (2 Timothy 4:11b), he conversely wrote how Jesus, God's Perfect Servant, put **compassion to a needy man OVER even His discipling plan**, Mk. 1:40-45:
 - 1. The discipling plan of the Father was for Jesus to go to the cities of Israel to minister in them, Mark 1:38.
 - 2. However, an incident occurred that left Jesus with the choice between sticking to that plan or of showing compassion on a very needy leper who approached Him to beg Him for healing, Mark 1:40 with 1:43-45:
 - a. Lepers were required by the Mosaic Law to tear their clothes in mourning, leave their hair disheveled, cover the upper lip, cry "Unclean!" to all who approached and live outside Israel's towns (Lev. 13:45-46; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Lev. 13:45-46). However, in a desperate move, a leper one day approached Jesus, fell on his knees and begged, "If you will, you can make me clean," Mark 1:20 ESV.
 - b. We know from Jesus' later instructions to this man in Mark 1:43-45 that Christ knew the immense relief from an oppressive life that His healing of this man would have were he to be healed would spur him to tell everyone around of that healing (Mark 1:45a), and that this heralding action would lead throngs of people so to crowd about Jesus that He could no longer enter Israel's cities in His public ministry since the crowds around Him would make life and business in those towns impossible, Mark 1:45b.
 - c. Thus, upon healing him, Jesus knew He would have to charge the leper sternly and immediately send him off with the order that he say nothing to anyone, but go and show himself to the priest and offer for his cleansing what Moses had commanded in Leviticus 14:1-57 as a testimony to the priests, Mark 1:43-44.
 - d. In view of the fact that this leper had already boldly moved outside the directives of the Mosaic Law for lepers just to approach Jesus when he should have warned Jesus to keep His distance, crying "Unclean!", Jesus (as omniscient God) knew this man would not obey His word about keeping quiet about his healing, and maybe not even go to the priests as required by the Law, hindering Jesus' witness to them.
 - 3. Regardless of these realities, Jesus felt "deep pity" (*splanchnistheis*, Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 111) for the leper, and did the unthinkable to reach out and touch him, saying, "I will; be clean," Mark 1:41 ESV.
 - 4. The leprosy immediately left the man, and he was cleansed so that the disfiguring effects of the disease were also reversed so that he was made perfectly whole in God's grace, Mark 1:42.
 - 5. Though Jesus then sternly warned the healed man to say nothing to anyone but to go to the priest and show himself to him in line with the Law, the healed man instead heralded to all his healing, Mark 1:43-45a.
 - 6. Accordingly, Jesus could no longer publicly enter any town, but had to stay out in desolate places where the throngs from the cities would come out to see Him from every place, Mark 1:45b.

Lesson: *Though God's plan for Jesus' ministry was that He go to Israel's cities to disciple people, and though healing a bold leper would lead to Christ's not being able to follow that plan, nor even get a testimony of His healing power to the priests, Jesus STILL put His COMPASSION for the needy man OVER the DISCIPLING PLAN, healing the needy man at the COST of that PLAN.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ as our compassionate Savior, John 3:16; Mark 1:15. (2) In serving God, may we like Jesus give priority to showing compassion to needy individuals over our discipling plans as Jesus did even if it risks limiting our testimony's outreach to others.*