

**A HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS**  
**XXXIV. Christ's Full Devotion To The Father's Calling**  
**(Matthew 4:23-25; Mark 1:35-39; Luke 4:42-44)**

**I. Introduction**

- A. Christ had been sent into the world not to do His own will, but to do the will of God the Father, John 5:30.
- B. In the historical context of what is recorded in Matthew 4:23-25, Mark 1:35-39 and Luke 4:42-44, Jesus' full devotion to His Father's will was abundantly evident. We view these passages for our insight and application:

**II. Christ's Full Devotion To The Father's Calling, Matthew 4:23-25; Mark 1:35-39; Luke 4:42-44.**

- A. In Matthew 4:23-25, Mark 1:35-39 and Luke 4:42-44, Jesus was reported to having risen from sleep a great while before daylight and gone out of Peter's house in Capernaum where He had been staying to a solitary place to spend time in prayer with the Father.
- B. Peter and other disciples with him had then gone out looking for Jesus, and when they had found Him, they informed Him that everyone in the area was looking for Him.
- C. Christ then replied that they needed to go into the next towns that He might preach the kingdom of God there also, for He had been sent by the Father to minister there as well as in Capernaum.
- D. In view of the historical context of this event, Christ's actions and words at this time demonstrated His full devotion to doing the will of God the Father as opposed to all other competing distractions (as follows):
  - 1. In His past ministry, Jesus had moved from His hometown of Nazareth to Capernaum by the Sea of Galilee after He had faced the rejection of His ministry by His townspeople where He had grown up, a rejection that included their effort to try to kill Him, cf. Luke 4:14-31a.
  - 2. At Capernaum, Jesus had known a strenuous but edifying ministry of wide acceptance, Mark 1:21-34:
    - a. He had ministered the Word of God in the synagogue of Capernaum, astonishing the congregation in His teaching them with authority unlike the Hebrew scribes, Mark 1:21-22.
    - b. A demon who was possessing a man in the synagogue had tried to undermine Jesus' authority before the congregation by crying out words that would lead the people to distrust His authority, so Jesus had rebuked the demon, ordered it to be quiet, and then He had cast the demon out of the man, Mark 1:23-26.
    - c. This event became known all around Galilee, and Jesus' authority over demons was noted, Mark 1:27-28.
    - d. Immediately following this ministry in the synagogue, Jesus was asked to come to heal Peter's mother-in-law who had been suffering from a life-threatening illness, and He had healed her so completely that she had immediately risen and had served Him and His disciples in her home for some time, Luke 4:38-39.
    - e. News of Christ's exorcism of the demon possessed man and His healing of Peter's mother-in-law resulted in people all around the region bringing many sick and demon possessed people that evening for Christ's help, and He had ministered to many of these needy people, Mark 1:32-34.
  - 3. Accordingly, the great contrast between Jesus' rejection in His hometown of Nazareth and the area-wide acceptance of His ministry in Capernaum would tempt one who had experienced such contrasting results of his ministry to believe that he should stay in Capernaum to enjoy a productive ministry there!
  - 4. In addition, the "previous day had been strenuous," with Christ's ministry of the Word, His exorcism of the demon in the man in the synagogue, His healing Peter's mother-in-law and His ministering into the late hours of the night helping throngs of sick and demon possessed people, what would make one want to take a rest, perhaps even a sabbatical!
  - 5. However, Jesus looked beyond His ministry rejection at Nazareth, beyond its acceptance at Capernaum, beyond the fatigue factor of the previous strenuous day, to focus on the will of His heavenly Father:
    - a. Rising long before sunrise, Christ left for a solitary place to pray in communion with the Father.
    - b. When approached by Peter and the other disciples with news that all men in the region sought Him, Jesus replied that the Father's will was that they go to other cities, for the Father had sent Him to minister there as well. Past ministry rejection or acceptance, and past busyness could not replace the Father's calling! Jesus thus demonstrated full personal devotion to His heavenly Father's calling, cf. John 5:30.

***Lesson:*** *Jesus did not let His ministry's rejection at Nazareth, its great acceptance at Capernaum, nor His fatigue from the past, strenuous day's ministries distract Him from a full devotion to the Father's calling.*

***Application:*** *May we heed Jesus' example to keep our focus on God's calling for us without getting distracted from it by any negative or positive issues. The will of God for us should be our all-consuming priority in life.*