



The Gospel of Mark The Missionary God Has Astonishing Authority

Mark 1:21-39

David Sunday October 28, 2018

Father, we thank You again for giving us this Book. It's unlike any other. As we read this Book, it is reading us and judging the thoughts and intentions of our hearts. It's a living and active Word that will abide forever because it is Your Word, the Word of the living and eternal God. We pray, Lord, that You would break the hard and stony ground in our hearts, deliver us from our stubbornness, pride, complacency and apathy. Cause us, Lord, to approach Your Word today with the expectation that You will do amazing things here through Your Word. We ask for this in Jesus' name. Amen.

If you could spend 24 hours with anyone you could choose, who would you pick? Maybe it would be a friend you haven't seen in a while. A couple weeks ago I went on a retreat with a pastor friend of mine. This has become an annual rhythm and the time we spend together studying, preparing, talking and catching up is very special to me. I look forward to those times together. God refreshes me and imparts grace to strengthen me during those times.

Or maybe you'd want to spend 24 uninterrupted hours with your spouse. Those of you with young kids might have a hard time getting ten minutes of uninterrupted time together, so 24 hours seems like a luxury you cannot afford.

Or what if you could pick anyone from history could spend 24 hours with that person, uninterrupted. I'm quite sure that if we were to pose that question across the world today, the person from history who would get the most votes would be Jesus of Nazareth. He is by far the most consequential Person who ever lived. In this first chapter of Mark, we see how famous Jesus was.

What if you could spend 24 hours with Jesus? Sometimes I think, "If I could just have one day with Jesus, walking with Him through my life here on earth, it would give me a whole new perspective. I'd never be the same." Well, that's what Mark gives us here in this passage—Mark 1:21-39. Mark guides through a 24-hour period of Jesus' life. It takes place in Capernaum, a

bustling town on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee. To us, the Sea of Galilee would be more like a lake.

There were maybe 10,000 people living in this village of Capernaum, lots of whom were fishermen. There was a harbor extending along a 2,500-foot promenade that was supported by an eight-foot-wide sea wall from which piers went out into the lake. Fishermen would leave from there daily to fish for their living. This is the place where Jesus chose to begin His ministry.

Simon Peter, one of Jesus' disciples, had a house in Capernaum. In fact, in recent archeological excavations, remains of a synagogue and also of a church have been found. Many people believe that church was built over Peter's original home. It's possible that Jesus lived for a time right there in Simon Peter's home. There were three other disciples besides Simon Peter who spent time with Jesus here in Capernaum: Andrew, James and John. Mark is going to guide us through this day in Capernaum in Jesus' life, beginning on the morning of the Sabbath and all the way through the next 24 hours.

As you listen to these 24 hours in the life of Jesus, ask yourself, "How would my life change if I walked with Jesus through this day? What would I learn about His priorities? How would His priorities reshape my own? How would I be affected by His character? What impressions would be left on my mind and heart so that I would never be the same again after having been with Jesus on this day?"

Let's worship Him as we hear this account of this one day in His life, as the Holy Spirit testifies to us of our wonderful Savior. Mark 1, beginning with verse 21:

²¹ And they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath he entered the synagogue and was teaching. ²² And they were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes. ²³ And immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, ²⁴ "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are— the Holy One of God."

²⁵ But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" ²⁶ And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying out with a loud voice, came out of him. ²⁷ And they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." ²⁸ And at once his fame spread everywhere throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee.

²⁹ And immediately he left the synagogue and entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ³⁰ Now Simon's mother-in-law lay ill with a fever, and immediately they told him about her. ³¹ And he came

and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

³² That evening at sundown they brought to him all who were sick or oppressed by demons. ³³ And the whole city was gathered together at the door. ³⁴ 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.

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.

This is the Word of God. Thank You for it.

Sabbath morning (verses 21-28)

Let's begin on that Sabbath morning. People have laid their work aside. It's a day of rest and worship. Around the middle of the morning people are making their way to the synagogue to pray and hear the teaching of Scripture. On this day there's a new Teacher, Jesus of Nazareth. As He teaches, people become aware that something completely out of the ordinary is happening here.

Mark doesn't tell us what Jesus is teaching this day. His focus is not on the content of His teaching; His focus is on the character of the Teacher. Unlike the rabbis, Jesus isn't just commenting on someone else's ideas. He's not a second-hander or a third-hander. He's not mimicking anyone else. When Jesus gets up to speak, it's not just that He has superior charisma or superior eloquence. That's not what impresses the people.

What impresses them is in verse 22: He speaks with authority. The word there is *exousia*, which means "out of the original substance." Mark is telling us that Jesus speaks as the Author of God's Word. He speaks as the Source of God's Word. He is the divine original. His words are full of substance, weight and authority. They grip the hearts of the people. I know that today on the internet you can listen to thousands of preachers.

Maybe you have this experience where you listen to one and say, "That's the best preacher I've ever heard." Then you listen to the next one and say, "Now, he's even better than that one." We compare preacher to preacher and pick our favorite flavor of the day. But Jesus is in a whole different stratosphere. When Jesus speaks truth, He speaks as the Author of that truth—so much so, that the people are amazed. They are astonished at His teaching, as we read in verse 22. That

word for “astonished” is a strong verb that means to strike or to smite. The worshippers in the synagogue at Capernaum realize they are in the presence of holiness. As Jesus presses the absolute claims of God upon their minds, sticking awe, fear and astonishment into them. No one is bored or passive or apathetic. All of them are thunderstruck by Jesus’ teaching.

Friends, this should be our reaction whenever God’s Word is opened to us. It’s how we should respond. See, a preacher’s job is not to entertain. We get plenty of that in the world. A preacher is not someone who is trying to make God’s Word relevant. My goal is not to make God’s Word relevant to you. My goal is to become so under the control of God’s Word and under the authority of Christ that I’m able, by the Spirit, to convey His gospel truth to you with clarity and faithfulness, in the Spirit’s power.

I’m grieved whenever I hear people today talking about making the Bible relevant. I think that’s an awful thing to say. If we need something clever, something interesting, something we think will grab people’s attention in addition to the Bible, we are way off base. Perish that thought! The reason so much preaching is irrelevant is because there is so little of the Word of God and so much of our preaching.

When we open the Word of God with the confidence that Christ is speaking through His Word and that this is the Word of the living God—that the Spirit breathed out this Word—there will be an authority that pierces the heart. We will see that it’s not the Bible that needs to be made relevant to us; it’s our lives that need to be made relevant to the Bible. We’re the ones who need the adjustment.

I’ll tell you what that the devil has no doubt about the relevance of God’s Word. Mark tells us that while Jesus was teaching, something very disturbing started to happen in the room. Have you ever been in the middle of a crowd listening to a powerful speaker, when all of a sudden someone in the audience begins to shout at the speaker, confronting him? You know how awkward and uncomfortable that feels. That’s what starts to happen.

Mark tells us in verse 23 there is a man sitting in the synagogue. He might be a regular worshipper in that synagogue who had never bothered anyone up to this point. But when Jesus starts speaking with a striking, smiting authority, this man gets agitated. He is provoked. The security team begins to get nervous, watching this guy. They had never seen anything like this before. Mark tells us there is a real spiritual being—an unclean spirit, a demon—who has taken control of this man and is acting out through him.

We don’t know how long this man had been tormented by this demon, or how it originally entered him. But throughout Mark’s Gospel we’re going to see Jesus coming into contact with

demons, with the supernatural world, with the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places (Ephesians 6:12). Jesus has come to do battle with them. He is the Lion and His teeth were bared.

As soon as Jesus begins speaking, this demon is fully aware that he is up against the dread Destroyer of the prince of darkness. But as it says in the hymn, he knows “his doom is sure.” Like a man in handcuffs leaning against the car, shouting questions at his arresting officer, this demon doesn’t have any authority to demand anything from Jesus—but he’s raging anyway. “*What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us?*” To translate it, this unclean spirit is saying, “Why are You here, Jesus? Go away! Leave us alone!”

Jesus doesn’t answer the demons questions. The demon already knows the answer, “Yes, He has come to destroy you.” This is the reason the Son of God appeared: to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8). No one in this synagogue at this moment is more aware of Who Jesus really is than this demon. This demon knows more about the true identity of Jesus than the disciples themselves know. Listen to what he says in verse 24: “*I know who you are—the Holy One of God.*”

When you see people encountering Jesus in the Gospels, they use terms of respect: Master, Teacher, Lord. But this demon penetrates deeper into the real nature of Who Jesus is: He is the Holy One of God. This isn’t the only time it happened. It happens again in chapter three: “I know who you are—you are the Son of God,” says a demon. In chapter five it happens again: “I know who you are—the Son of the Most High God.”

The demons see Jesus for Who He is. They remember Him. He’s the One Who punished them when they rebelled in the first place, casting them out of heaven. They know He’s the one Who’s going to throw them into the lake of fire that burns forever and ever with the devil and all his angels—and they tremble at His appearing.

Friends, there’s a vital lesson here for us. You can know Who Jesus is and still not be saved by Jesus. You can know His identity. But it’s not enough to know there is a God, or even to know that Jesus is the Holy One of God. Even the demons believe this, as we see here, and they tremble. They know Who Jesus is. They tremble in fear before Jesus. But friends, they do not love Jesus. They do not submit to Jesus. They do not treasure Jesus. They do not surrender their wills to Jesus. They do not bow before His authority and worship Him, saying, “Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord, to You.” They don’t do that. But that is what it takes to be a Christian.

Martin Luther said, “The life of Christianity consists in personal pronouns. It is one thing to say, ‘Christ is a Savior.’ It is quite another to say, ‘He is my Savior and my Lord.’ The devil can say the first; the true Christian alone can say the second.” So don’t be content to just know truth about Jesus. Don’t rest until you can say with confidence, “I have believed and seen that You are

the Holy One of God. Jesus, I trust You, I love You, I surrender my heart and life to You, dear Lord Jesus.” Don’t rest until this faith has become personal to you.

Jesus responds to the demon in Mark 1:25 by rebuking him. He says, “*Be silent.*” [He probably was actually less polite: “Shut up and come out of him!”] This demon had been ravishing this man’s life and Jesus did not come to destroy the man. He came to redeem that man. He came to destroy the devil. When this word of command comes from the mouth of Jesus, the unclean spirit has no choice. He doesn’t want to leave, but he has to leave. On his way out, he convulses the man with a loud shriek. Demons are always loud when they’re in the presence of Jesus. This unclean spirit exits the man and flees from the presence of his divine Destroyer. As a result, a broken man is restored to health and wholeness. The possibility of entering into a new relationship with Jesus is there before him.

This man is a picture to all of us that no one is beyond the grace of God. No matter how much Satan has ravaged your life, no matter how much evil has taken control of you, producing its deadly fruit, no matter how bad you have been, the same thing that happened to that man in that synagogue can happen to you today. You can be free. You can be delivered from the dominion of darkness and brought into the Kingdom of God’s own Son, Who is full of light and life. You can be redeemed. All it takes is a word from Jesus. If you believe that word, He sets you free.

When we are free, we still have to believe the word, don’t we? My friend Jeff Brewer said something that really gripped my heart: “The enemy will say similar words to you as a Christian that he said to Jesus but meaning a much different thing. He will say to those of us who trust in Jesus, ‘I know who you are. I know what you have done.’ He will throw lies at us, false condemnation, accusation and half-truths from a long since forgiven past.”

We need to remember that Jesus has all authority and whatever He silences, we need not listen to anymore. Perfect love from Jesus casts out the fear of guilt and accusation. When Satan tempts us to despair, we can look upward and see Him there Who made an end to all our sin. We can know that when Jesus says, “Your sin is forgiven,” it is forgiven. It will never torment us again.

So imagine what it was like as all the people were leaving the synagogue that day. They didn’t have Twitter. They didn’t have smart phones to record the scene. I can just imagine they were spreading the news all over Capernaum. Maybe some of them were even getting into their boats, going up and down the seashore, telling other towns along the way what had happened that day in the synagogue.

We know that as night would fall, many people would already have heard the news about Jesus. Look at what Mark tells us in Mark 1:27: “*They were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, ‘What is this? A new teaching with authority!’*” Those were the two

things that impressed them: He taught with authority and “*He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.*” No other teacher had ever done this before. Verse 28: “*And at once his fame spread everywhere throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee.*”

Lunch after synagogue (verses 29-31)

After a morning of ministry, I imagine Jesus was hungry. Preachers like to eat after they preach. Simon, Andrew, James and John were hungry too. So Simon Peter said to Jesus, “Let’s go back to my house and have some lunch.”

See what happens in verse 29. When they got there, they found Simon’s mother-in-law very ill with a fever. Now, I really resist rabbit trails when I’m preaching, but I’m not going to resist, just this once, okay? Here’s a rabbit trail. This is Reformation Sunday and during the Reformation, *Sola Scriptura* became one of the banner cries. Scripture alone is the authority of God’s people. I know that some of you grew up in a tradition that taught that Peter was the first pope. Just to be clear, the Simon we’re reading about here is the same man who’s later called Peter. They’re one and the same. So we are looking right now at the man that the Roman Catholic church says is the first pope. I know also that in that tradition, you were taught that priests need to take a vow of celibacy. They cannot be married. I just want to point out the fact that Simon Peter is a married man. You don’t get a mother-in-law without marrying someone.

So take this as an example of how the church can stray from the authority of God’s Word, teaching doctrines and making requirements that the Scriptures themselves do not teach. It’s an important reminder to us, because we don’t have any authority except the authority we receive from Jesus Christ—and it’s mediated through His Word. If we stray from this Word, we lose our authority.

So that’s the end of the rabbit trail. Let’s get back to the narrative here in Mark.

Jesus walked through the door of Simon’s house and made His way into the room where Simon’s mother-in-law lay very ill with a fever. She was noticeably ill. There’s no thermometer that’s telling them this. They could see she was very, very sick. All Jesus did was take her by the hand and raise her up—and instantly the fever left her. Just a touch is all it takes for Jesus to heal someone.

She was so well that she went into her kitchen and started making them a meal. She didn’t have a trace of that fever left in her. When it says, “*She began to serve them,*” we should hear in those words that she was restored to dignity and usefulness. She was able to do for Jesus and the disciples the same thing the angels did for Jesus when He was out in the wilderness being tempted

by the devil. Mark 1:13 says, “*The angels were ministering to him...*” and that’s the exact same word used now of Peter’s mother-in-law. She was doing an angelic work.

In being restored to service, she was also restored to the life of true discipleship. This is what greatness in the Kingdom of Jesus consists of. This is what being a great disciple in Jesus’ service looks like. It’s to be the servant of all, because that’s what Jesus came to do. He “*came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many*” (Matthew 20:28). Jesus came to be the Servant Who serves and heals and delivers—and all it takes is His touch.

An unforgettable evening (verses 32-34)

This day is only half spent. Let’s move on to verses 32-34—an unforgettable evening. They had an amazing lunch. They probably had been laughing and celebrating all afternoon. The mother-in-law couldn’t get enough of Jesus after He healed her. She might have been like the very talkative lady who was converted under Spurgeon’s ministry. She came to him one day and said, “Oh, Mr. Spurgeon, Christ has changed my life—and He shall never hear the end of it.” That’s like what was going on in our story. All around Capernaum people were peeking out their windows, waiting for nightfall.

Jewish law said as soon as three stars appeared in the evening sky, the Sabbath was over. They were waiting to see those stars. The minute those stars came out, the doors opened. They were all running to Peter’s home in Capernaum. The streets were filled with people. We read in verse 33 that “*the whole city was gathered together at the door,*” all the sick, all the oppressed.

It was like an ER after a hurricane. Can you imagine the smell of all this sickness, the sight of all these beleaguered people, the loud noises and shrieks as the demons were acting out for one last time? One by one, Jesus touched, healed, spoke and delivered, resulting in great praise rising to His glorious name. He has authority to deliver us from the worst things that torment us. There is no evil that can stand in the way of Jesus’ power to save.

As we read in verse 34, “*He healed many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons.*” The demons did not like this. They started shouting out, because in the ancient world to be able to say someone’s name was to have power or control over that person. They thought, “If we could just say His name, we’ll have some control over Him. But “*He would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.*”

Jesus said, “You’re not going to be the ones who are promoting My gospel. I will be in charge of how I reveal Myself, when I reveal Myself, to whom I reveal Myself.” In Mark’s Gospel, the way to get to know Jesus was to start walking with Him. It is on the path of discipleship that

Jesus is revealed to us. As we spend time with Him, watch His works and see His ways, He is revealed.

Before we move on to the next section, I'd like to address a question many of us have. If Jesus can heal anyone, why doesn't He heal everyone today? If healing results in His children serving Him, like Simon's mother-in-law did, why doesn't He heal all of us so we can continue to serve Him? The answer is that these are signposts. The purpose of a signpost is not for us to stare at the signpost. The purpose of a signpost is so that we know the right direction. It points us in the direction we should be going to reach our destination, but we must keep moving along in the right direction in order to reach that goal.

What Jesus is showing us through these great miracles, through His deliverances and healings, is that He's the One Who has all authority. With these miracles He's pointing us forward to His Kingdom. He's saying to us, "Don't focus on the miracles. Focus on Me. Put your trust in Me, then you will enter into My Kingdom where you will live in a world where sickness and death and the devil no longer have any more sway." What Jesus is saying through these miracles is, "Look to Me."

A friend of mine put it like this: Think of purchasing a high-rise condo in Chicago that could have had a perfect view of the lake, but there's an old dilapidated warehouse blocking your view. You want to see that lake and you're rich enough to hire a demolishing company to take down that warehouse. After that warehouse is taken down, you don't stand there just staring at the crane. You can see the sunrise now. You look out at the lake. You gaze on that.

Likewise, when we encounter Jesus in the Gospels, we're not supposed to stare at the miracles and say, "Oh, we want more of these." No, we're supposed to stare at the King and say, "Oh, we want more of Him. We want to be part of His Kingdom." We are to focus on Him. Whether Jesus heals you right now or not is not the main point. Coming to Jesus is the main point. Tim Keller said, "Almost always when we first go to Jesus saying, 'This is my deepest wish,' His response is that we need to go a lot deeper than that."

We cry, "Oh, Lord, my deepest wish is that You would heal me." Jesus says, "Go deeper than that."

Or we cry, "Oh, Lord, my deepest wish is that You would deliver me from this trouble." Jesus says, "Go deeper than that."

When we honestly say, "Oh, Lord, my deepest wish is to know You," then Jesus says, "Okay. Now we're talking. Let Me reveal Myself to you."

Before the rising of the sun (verses 35-37)

Let's move on to verses 35-37. It had been a late night for Jesus. He had poured Himself out, and He needed renewal and strength. What did He do? He slept. But He knew His deepest strength came not from sleep, but from communion with His Father. So in verse 35 we read that very early in the morning, while no one else had gotten up yet—*"it was still dark"*—Jesus slipped out of the house and went to a solitary place, a desolate place, where He met with His Father in prayer.

Sometimes we think, "I don't need to carve out special times of prayer to God. I can pray anytime I want, anywhere I want." That's true—you can. But if we never carve out solitary times of solitude with the Father, if we never make special times just to pray, the example of Jesus rebukes us. He was the Son of God, but in His humanity He realized He was utterly weak and helpless without the strength that came through His Father and the Spirit filling Him. The busier He got and the more demanding His ministry became, the more He had to find time away from the crowds in order to pray.

His disciples didn't understand that. They woke up and were looking around, thinking, "Where is Jesus? He's gone out of the house. People are coming to the door and they want to see more of Jesus. He could become a celebrity here in Capernaum, if He would just come back here and get to work. What's He doing out there?" They searched all over for Him. The word in verse 36 is that they "hunted" for Him. When they found Him praying, they were a bit perturbed with Him. "What are You doing, Jesus? Everyone's looking for You. We don't have time for this."

This raises the question: what do you want in a shepherd? Do you want someone who is running around trying to meet every human demand placed on him? Or do you want a man who knows that apart from God, he can do nothing? So he's devoted to prayer. I fear that in the church today we want religious professionals. We want religious politicians who are driven to please the demands of the people. Too often we're not looking for shepherds who are devoted first and foremost to prayer and the ministry of God's Word, like Jesus was. Then the church becomes anemic. Samuel Chadwick got it right when he said:

Satan dreads nothing but prayer. His one concern is to keep the saints from praying. He fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayerless work, prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, he mocks our wisdom, but he trembles when we pray.

That's where the power is. Far too many spiritual leaders today will be allured by the siren call of the disciples. "Everyone is looking for you!" We take the bait. We love the notoriety. We crave the popularity. We find our identity in meeting people's demands and making people happy.

Too many of us need to be needed. We get intoxicated by the sense that “everyone is looking for me, everyone needs me,” and we lose touch with Jesus and what His mission is all about.

Our Savior is on a mission (verses 38-39)

Look afresh to Jesus. See how He responds to the demands of the crowd. Realize our Savior is on a mission and learn what His mission is all about in verses 38-39: “*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.’*” I’d circle the word “that.” Why did Jesus come? To preach, to proclaim, “The Kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe the gospel.” That’s why He came. That is His mission. That is His purpose.

I heard a pastor put it something like this: The main priority of Jesus is not to give you a better life here and now. The main priority of Jesus is to give you a better death. The main priority of Jesus is not to make everything nice and easy for you here on earth. It’s not to heal you of everything that afflicts you, not to give you health, wealth and prosperity. The main priority of Jesus is to prepare you to live in the Kingdom that will never end, the Kingdom that is forever.

In order to do this, He had to go to a cross. He had to die, so He could rescue us from our rebellion against God’s sovereign kingship over our lives, so He could reconcile us to God and restore us to a right relationship with God. That’s what Jesus was all about. He cared for people’s lives here on earth. He did all He could with the people in front of Him to minister to their needs. He was a compassionate Savior. He was a Savior Who touched people and Who ministered to the common person with common needs like a fever. That’s our Savior.

But what Jesus is really all about is proclaiming the gospel of the Kingdom, the gospel that He would go to the cross to make it efficacious in the lives of all those who put their trust in Him. That’s what we’re to be all about as well. What does Jesus send us out to do? He sends us out to go into all the world, with all the authority He has in heaven and on earth, and preach the gospel to every creature, making disciples of all the nations (Matthew 28:16-20).

So let’s revisit our initial question: If you could spend 24 hours with Jesus, what would you see—in one word? You’d see authority. You’d see authority over demons, authority over diseases, authority to heal, authority to set people free from oppression. All authority in heaven and on earth is His because He got this authority through His oneness with the Father. He cultivated that relationship through prayer. He exercised that authority through preaching. That’s what we see in this day with Jesus.

Here’s the thing: when you put your trust in Jesus, you can spend 24 hours with Jesus—not just once, but every day of your life. You can live in His presence. Jesus comes and lives with those

who trust in Him today through His Spirit. He reveals Himself to us through His Word. We really do see Christ in this Word. We really do have fellowship with Him, a relationship with Him, that grows and grows and grows, the more we expose ourselves to this Word and to prayer with Him.

So let me reverse the question I asked you at the beginning. What if someone spent 24 hours with you? Watching you. Observing you? What would they see about your priorities? What would they believe you're living for? The truth is when people see us and spend time with us, our lives should remind them of Jesus. Jesus Christ now lives in us and the life we now live we live by faith in Him (Galatians 2:20).

Before we put our Bibles away, I want us to bow right here, right now, and consider these questions prayerfully.

Heavenly Father, we bow in Your presence. We quiet our hearts before You. We thank You that You have revealed Christ to us through this Word. We pray, Heavenly Father, that You would search us and know our hearts. Father, I want to ask You—we want to ask You, each of us—is my life life-giving to others? Is my presence in people's lives a healing presence or a damaging presence? Are my words healing words or hurting words?

Have mercy on me, God. Fill me with the Spirit of Jesus, that I might more accurately resemble Him. Father, I ask in Your presence, am I one who oppresses people, or am I one who brings freedom and life to people? Father, I ask in Your presence, am I one who relies on my own strength, or am I one who knows that apart from You I can do nothing?

O Lord, teach us to pray. Teach us to depend on You. Father, in Your presence, we ask that Your Word would dwell richly in us, so that as we speak, we would speak with the authority that comes from Your Word, that we would speak wonderful words of life to people.

Father, I pray for the person today who knows about Jesus but who has not yet trusted in Him. Right now, right here, I pray by Your Spirit that You would turn people toward Christ. You are a personal Savior for real people like us, Lord Jesus, and we put our trust in You.

Father, as Your people, we pray, may the mind of Christ our Savior live in us from day to day, by His love and power controlling all we do and all we say, for the glory of His great name we pray. Amen.

New Covenant Bible Church

4N780 Randall Road, St. Charles, IL 60175

(630) 584-2611 ♦ www.newcbc.org

All Scriptures quoted directly from the English Standard Version unless otherwise noted.

Text provided by sermontranscribers.net ♦ emily@sermontranscribers.net