

# Let Us Go

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Preacher: Mike Scrivani

[ 0 : 00 ] Mark chapter 1 verses 21 through 39 and then go back through and explain what's happening here in the message that the Lord has, I believe, for us.

Let's read that together. Let's read that together.

And the unclean spirit convulsing him and crying out with a loud voice came out of him. 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. And at once his fame spread everywhere throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

And immediately he left the synagogue and entered the house of Simon and Andrew with James and John. Now Simon's mother-in-law lay ill with a fever and immediately they told him about her. And he came and took her by the hand and lifted her up.

[ 1 : 39 ] And the fever left her and she began to serve them. That evening at sundown they brought to him all who were sick or who were oppressed by demons. And the whole city was gathered together at the door.

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. 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 they said to him, everybody is looking for you. And he said to them, let us go on to the next towns that I may preach there also.

For this is why I came out. And he went throughout Galilee preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons.

There are some Sundays that stick out more so than other Sundays. And I'll never forget a Sunday back in my previous church in Leavenworth where it was about this time of year.

[ 2 : 54 ] A little bit later on in the year, college students had been let out for school. And so a lot of them were home with their parents. And I remember that because I remember at the end of the service, during the invitation, one of those students who had come visiting with a student whose parents went to our church.

She was in our youth group growing up. So this girl, as soon as the invitation was given, she stood up and she sprinted to the front of the podium, of the steps.

And she just collapsed on the steps and just started crying. And her friend ran up right up, immediately following her. And together they just sat there and they prayed. And it was awesome to see what God was doing there.

And then later on, as I was greeting people at the door, there was another student, one of the sons of a couple of our church. He was downstairs. And one of my friends in the church came and he got me and said, Hey, you got to come downstairs and pray for this guy.

And again, he was just all out of sorts because he'd heard the gospel and he'd realized that he was far from the Lord. And so we prayed for him. And then together, me and my friend, we went out and we went down to an apartment complex where we had been doing some evangelism.

[ 4 : 06 ] And we carried out the rest of that day. And we had these great conversations and prayed with people. And I just remember going home and thinking, if every Sunday could be like this Sunday, Lord, that would be fantastic.

Not all those Sundays are like that, but that one certainly stuck out in my mind. But as good as that Sunday was, it paled in comparison to this day that Jesus had with his disciples on that Sabbath day in Capernaum, early on in the ministry of Jesus.

It begins with him immediately entering the synagogue and preaching there. And Mark says that the people, when they heard him preaching, they were amazed at his teaching.

Now think about it. The word of God was preaching the word of God. It doesn't get much better than that. Whatever they were hearing was no doubt the best sermon that they'd ever heard in their lives. And even there, that word astonished in the Greek, what it literally means is to strike out of one's wits. They were outside of their wits. They had been stricken out of their wits when they heard Jesus, the word of God, preaching the word of God.

[ 5 : 17 ] So imagine it's you back then, sitting there in First Baptist Church of Capernaum, or for our sake, Capernaum Park Baptist Church.

And we're there, and here's Jesus, and he's the word of God, and he's expounding upon the word of God, which is about him. He's preaching to us a message, and it's holding us all captive.

We're on the edge of our seats with anticipation and waiting to hear what he's going to say next.

We've lost track of time. In fact, we don't care about what time it is.

We've lost the fact that when we leave, we're going to be last in line at Senior Salsa. We don't care because we can't wait to hear what Jesus is going to say next.

And as we're on the edge of our seats from the back of the building, the doors burst open. And this man comes in, and he's screaming. And it's clear to see as you whip your head back to the back that this person is nuts.

[ 6 : 22 ] They've lost their minds by his appearance and by the words that he's using. And he interrupts Jesus' sermon, and he's challenging Jesus. What are you doing here? Have you come before the time?

And as he's moving towards the front, you're wondering what's going to happen. And you're probably thinking, if it was me, where's the nearest exit to get out of here, right? Or where are my kids?

Because I don't know who this person is, but they look terrifying. But before you can decide what to do, Jesus calls out in a loud voice that fills the whole room. And he rebukes the demon-possessed man.

And he makes that demon leave him. And then all of a sudden, the man falls down in a heap. And he's screaming. And he's shrieking. And he's convulsing on the ground right there in the middle.

And all of a sudden, it stops. You would have stories to share when you went home about what happened in church that day, wouldn't you? But that's not it. Then they go on from there.

[ 7 : 24 ] And Jesus goes to Simon Peter's house. And he heals his mother-in-law. And then they keep bringing people to him to be healed.

And he heals them. What an amazing day. And from the rest of the day to the setting of the sun, Jesus is there.

The whole city has gathered around him. The whole city is there. And Jesus with his disciples is ministering to them.

That's a pretty great day in ministry, don't you think? Man. A great sermon. Followed by a showdown with a demon.

Followed by the healing of all kinds of sorts of illnesses. The whole town. The whole town came and gathered at the door of the house where Jesus was staying.

[ 8 : 27 ] And they stayed until it was nighttime. You'd think that such an eventful day would mean that, you know, a little extra rest was needed, right?

Maybe you sleep in a little bit. You hit the snooze clock a couple of times. Not for Jesus. He was up early the next morning. About sometime between 3 a.m. and 6 a.m.

While it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place. And Mark says, and there he prayed. You know, so often in our Christian life, the discipline of prayer is the one that we most often ignore.

We don't devote nearly as much time to prayer as we should. And often the only time that we do pray is when it's convenient for us to pray. When you're driving in the car, just that dead time where you don't have anything else to do.

You throw out a prayer or throw up a prayer to the Lord. So often as well, the only time that we pray is when we are in a desperate situation. After we've tried every other thing that there is to try and all there is left is prayer, then finally we go to the Lord in prayer as a last resort.

[ 9 : 43 ] Now I'm not suggesting that there is a right time and a wrong time to pray. Paul encourages the Ephesian Christians to pray at all times and about all different kinds of things.

But I do think that here Jesus' example has a lot to tell us about the necessity of prayer for believers. First of all, Jesus, the eternal Son of God, the second person of the Trinity, God in the flesh, if he felt like he needed to pray, then how much more so do we need to pray?

Secondly, Jesus made prayer a priority. Yes, he was fully God, but he was also fully human. He would have been tired as we get tired from such a long and eventful day.

But he still got up early in the morning and he got up to pray. He set out early in the morning to pray, giving the Father the very first part of his day.

Third, he prayed after a very successful day of ministry. And so there we see that, you know what? Prayer isn't just for when times are difficult, but for all times in life.

[ 11 : 04 ] And then fourth, he went to a desolate place to pray. Corporate prayer is essential, but so is private prayer. Charles Spurgeon said, secret prayer is the secret to prayer.

There are things that I'll tell you I will only pray about in secret, that I will not pray about in front of you all. We don't know what Jesus prayed here.

Mark doesn't record that because you know what? It's not any of our business what he had to pray about. But whatever he did pray about, we know that he wasn't praying to confess his sins because he was the perfect sinless Son of God.

But he did pray, and whatever he did pray was between him and the Father. Then in verse 36 it says, And Simon and those who were with him searched for him.

In the Greek, that is katidioko. And what that means is to follow hard upon. Like you're hunting in pursuit of finding something.

[ 12 : 14 ] You're following it perseveringly. And so they're searching for him, and then when they find him, finally, what they say to him is, Everyone is looking for you.

Now the tone of voice that Simon uses to address Jesus would be similar to the tone of voice a parent would use when their child had gone missing for hours. That they went to go look for their child, and they weren't there in that place that they thought they would be.

Have you ever been there, mom or dad? Grandparents, you go outside, you go to your front yard, and my kid is no longer where they said that they were going to be. And automatically your mind races to, What are they doing, or who has them, and what's happening to them at that moment? You are terrified, and so you search more diligently, asking your neighbors, asking everyone, Have you seen them describing him or her?

So the disciples are frantically looking for Jesus here. And when they find him, they rebuke him.

[ 13 : 19 ] For not being there that morning, but for leaving. Why is that? Well, here's why I think that was. What had happened the day before, and what had happened that morning, was every pastor's dream.

Every leader, anybody who really loves their church, what had happened the day before, would have been their dream scenario. A great sermon had been preached, and then it was accompanied by miraculous events.

Then verse 33, it says, And after these things, the whole city came to the door where Jesus was.

And so the next morning, the disciples had to, all they had to do, was open the door.

And the whole city was gathered there to hear more, to see more. All they had to do, was open the doors.

And that's the dream scenario that I'm talking about. Think about it. If all that we had to do, to reach our city, if all we had to do, to reach our families, and our neighbors, and the world, was to open the doors on Sunday morning, I'm all for that.

[ 14 : 45 ] These engaged things take time to plan, and to put together, and to think, well, we don't have to do any of that. We don't have to send anybody over to Latvia. All we have to do, is unlock our doors.

And the whole city will be here, to hear what we have to share. Man, I would fully embrace that. I would.

Then we'd make big plans, wouldn't we? The whole city is coming to our church. So we need a bigger building. We need a bigger sanctuary.

You know what? We could go multi-site. We could have little churches scattered all throughout our community. These are the plans that we would begin to formulate in our minds.

How easy, and how comfortable, it would be, if all we had to do to reach our world, was to open our doors, and let people come flooding in.

[ 15 : 45 ] So I believe that the last thing this small little group of disciples wanted to hear from Jesus was what he had to say to them in verse 38.

And he said to them, let us go. Let us go to the next house, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out.

He didn't come out to be confined indoors, to stay where things were comfortable. That's not why he came out. Though he had compassion for people and for their physical ailments, that was not why Jesus came out.

Over and over again in the Gospels, we see Jesus define his ministry in another way, telling us why he came out. Luke 5, 32, he says, I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Luke 19, 10, the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost. Mark 1, 14 through 15, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the Gospel of God, and saying, the time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand.

[ 17 : 02 ] Repent and believe in the Gospel. All of Jesus' other actions, whether it was his miraculous feedings, or his miraculous healings, they were done to validate the message that he had to share.

Why he came out. Why he came down from heaven to us. And so he went from town to town, and he did so ultimately, preaching the good news of the Gospel, knowing that he would end up on the cross for our sins.

that we might be saved. Through his life. Through his death. And through his resurrection. Miracles astonish, but they don't save.

Salvation can only come when people respond in repentant faith to the Gospel as it's being preached to them. Our Lord made prayer a priority, and he also made preaching a priority.

In keeping with those principles, Jesus chose not to go back to Capernaum that day. He chose not to stay where things seemed comfortable, where the ministry was thriving.

[ 18 : 28 ] He went on. In verse 39, he went all throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues, and casting out demons. And that single verse, Mark summarizes weeks, if not months, of time that Jesus spent doing exactly what he had originally come to Capernaum to do.

Preaching the good news and overpowering the forces of darkness. When he taught throughout the synagogues of Galilee, his emphasis was on Gospel proclamation.

And guess what? He's called those of us who have been saved to do the exact same thing. Matthew 28, 18-20, the Great Commission.

So many of us know it well. I want to read it again. And Jesus came to them after he was crucified, after he was resurrected. He said to them, All authority on heaven and earth has been given to me. Stay, therefore, and build large ministries in those towns.

Right? Not saying that that's wrong, but that's not the purpose. He said, Go, therefore. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

[ 19 : 51 ] And behold, I am with you always to the end of the age. So I hope that you see that all of us, all of us who have been saved have been commanded by the Lord to be involved in going, to be involved in his mission.

It is his sovereign choice to use us to communicate the gospel to the world. And that involves so much more than merely opening the doors of our building and hoping that people will come filing in. Because guess what? That doesn't work. That doesn't work. What does work is when we, like Jesus, faithfully pray.

We faithfully go. We faithfully give. And we faithfully preach the good news of Jesus Christ. Romans 10, 13-15.

You think, Well, I'm not a preacher. Well, guess what? You are called to preach the gospel. For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. How then will they call on him whom they have not believed?

[ 21 : 13 ] And how are they to believe in him whom they have not heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, how beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news.

Now you might hear that and you still might be thinking, Well, not me. Sounds good for others, but that doesn't sound good for me. Let me tell you, nobody is forcing you to give to the gospel debt. Nobody is going to force you to do that. Nobody is going to force you to go take part in the missions banquet, though we have Billy Sims and I think you'd be crazy to pass up that opportunity. But when you're in there, nobody is going to force you to go up to those pieces of paper and sign your name on them. Nobody is going to force you to do any of that. We want you to be involved, certainly.

God certainly wants your involvement, but nobody will force you to do any of those things. The power that sustains us in missions and evangelism is Christians being Christians.

[ 22 : 31 ] It's when Christians pray. The power that sustained Jesus was those times of prayer early on in the morning when it was just Him and the Father as He submitted to His will depending upon His Spirit.

Spirit. We need to do the same. So nobody is going to force you to do these things, but I am going to ask you to. But what I want to ask you to do first is will you pray?

You look around, you see we've got a lot of room. We've got a lot of people in Bartlesville and outside of Bartlesville who need to hear the good news of Jesus Christ. They're not in church right now.

Would you pray that God would use our church? And we're not trying to keep this to ourselves. We want the church, all of our churches to be reaching.

Would you pray for our church? Would you pray for the church to be actively seeking to reach those people? Would you be praying for the gospel debt whether you give to it or not?

[ 23 : 36 ] that the proceeds that are used would go to reach people in our community, in Oklahoma, in America, and beyond?

Would you pray that those are used wisely and resourcefully? Would you pray for yourself? Maybe you think, you know what?

That's just not comfortable for me. I don't know what I would say. I might prevent somebody from being saved because I don't know what to say. That's never the case.

Salvation doesn't depend upon us. It's all upon God and His grace. You just have to be willing. But pray about it. You pray, God, would you use me?

You know that He wants to. Pray, God, would you use me? I just don't feel like I have the ability. I just don't know what I would say. But you begin by praying.

[ 24 : 34 ] And you'd be surprised that God would answer that prayer. Some of the best evangelists that I've ever met are just regular people who God uses in mighty and powerful ways to share His good news through.

Would you pray? And would you preach the good news of the gospel to the lost? This is what Jesus came out to do. Listen.

Nobody is here in this sanctuary this morning because you thought of the gospel yourself. Right? God used somebody to preach the gospel to you.

And you can probably, you know who that person is. Would you ask, would you pray, would you seek to be that person that God would use to preach the gospel to somebody else?

So that they would know the hope that is in Christ? Would you seek to be used by Him to share the good news? Not just with your life, with your actions, but with your words.

[ 25 : 41 ] And I'm telling you that if you, as an individual, and that as we, if we as a church collectively will be praying with the desire that God would use us, that we'd be going with the desire that God will speak through us, I have a feeling that God will answer that prayer and that we will see the Lord bringing people to Him, knowing Christ as their Lord and Savior.

He wants us. He wants to use us to do it. Thank you.