

THE GOSPEL OF MARK

Message Three

The Contents of the Slave-Savior's Gospel Service

Scripture Reading: Mark 1:14-45

I. Christ as the Slave-Savior did not come to be served, but to serve; He served us in the past, He still serves us in the present, and He is going to serve us in the future—Mark 10:45; Luke 22:26-27; 12:37:

- A. The story of the gospel and the meaning of salvation are that Christ loves and serves us first, and then we love and serve Him; whenever we have a need, we can come to the Lord and let Him serve us so that He can serve others through us—Matt. 26:13; 1 John 4:19; John 13:12-17; Rom. 1:1; Gal. 6:17; 1 John 3:16.
- B. As the life-giving Spirit, the Slave-Savior serves us by dispensing Himself as life into us so that we can become the means by which He dispenses Himself as life into others—John 10:10b; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 1 John 5:16a; 2 Cor. 3:6.

II. We need to see and enter into the reality of the contents of the Slave-Savior's wonderful and excellent gospel service—Mark 1:14-45:

- A. The first thing the Slave-Savior did in His gospel service was to proclaim the gospel—vv. 14-20:
 - 1. Christ Himself, with all the processes He passed through and all the redemptive work He accomplished, is the content of the gospel—v. 1.
 - 2. Christ came not only as the Messenger of God, bringing a word or a message from God to God's people, but also as the message sent by God; He Himself is the living message of God—vv. 1-8; Mal. 3:1-3; cf. 4:1-2.
 - 3. The Slave-Savior's proclaiming was to announce God's glad tidings to the miserable people in bondage; His teaching (Mark 1:21-22) was to enlighten the ignorant ones in darkness with the divine light of the truth.
 - 4. His proclaiming implied teaching, and His teaching implied proclaiming—Matt. 4:23; Mark 1:38-39; 3:14; 6:12; 14:9; 16:15, 20.
- B. The second thing the Slave-Savior did in His gospel service was to teach the truth—1:21-22:

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1. The truth is the shining of the divine light on the facts of the Bible to televise a heavenly vision of those facts into our being; the truth is the shining of the light, the light is the light of life, and the life is the Spirit; thus, truth, life, and the Spirit (which are all Christ Himself) are inseparable—John 8:12, 32, 36; 1:4; 14:6a; 2 Cor. 3:6, 8, 17; cf. Rom. 8:2.
 2. The Lord's teaching of the truth (Mark 2:13; 4:1; 6:2, 6, 30, 34; 10:1; 11:17; 12:35; 14:49) was to bring people out of the satanic darkness into the divine light (Acts 26:18); the Slave-Savior, as the light of the world (John 8:12; 9:5), came as a great light to Galilee, the land of darkness, to shine on the people who were sitting in the shadow of death (Matt. 4:12-16).
 3. His teaching released the word of light to enlighten those in the darkness of death that they might receive the light of life—John 1:4.
- C. The third thing the Slave-Savior did in His gospel service was to cast out demons from the possessed people—Mark 1:23-28:
1. The demons' possession of people signifies Satan's usurpation of man, whom God created for His purpose.
 2. The Lord Jesus came to destroy the works of Satan (1 John 3:8), and His casting out of demons (Mark 1:34, 39; 3:15; 6:7, 13; 16:17) was for people to be delivered from Satan's bondage (Luke 13:16), out of Satan's authority of darkness (Acts 26:18; Col. 1:13), into God's kingdom (Mark 1:15).
- D. The fourth thing the Slave-Savior did in His gospel service was to heal the sick—vv. 29-39:
1. Sickness issues from sin and is a sign of man's abnormal condition before God; the Lord healed people's sick condition and restored them to normality that they might serve Him—v. 34; 3:10; 6:5, 13, 56.
 2. We must learn to preach the gospel and teach the truth like a physician, giving people a heavenly prescription and the divine medicine for their healing—Matt. 9:11-13; Luke 10:33-37; cf. Prov. 4:20-23; Exo. 30:25.

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- E. The fifth thing the Slave-Savior did in His gospel service was to cleanse the leper—Mark 1:40-45:
1. Leprosy signifies the sin of rebellion, the serious sin issuing from within man, such as willful sin, presumptuous sin, and opposing God with determination—1 John 3:4; cf. Isa. 14:12-15; Lev. 13:2; 14:9.
 2. As seen in the cases of Miriam (Num. 12:1-10), Gehazi (2 Kings 5:20-27), and Uzziah (2 Chron. 26:16-21), leprosy issues from rebellion against God's authority, God's deputy authority, God's regulation, and God's economy.
 3. In Leviticus 14:33-57 the house typifies the church as our real home, and the leprosy in the house signifies sins and evils in the church; the priest signifies the Lord or His deputy authority, and the examining of the house is not for condemnation but is a grace for healing—1 Cor. 1:11:
 - a. The removing of the infected stones after seven days (Lev. 14:40) signifies that after the observation of a complete period of time, if the problem of the church is still spreading, the believer or believers involved in the problem should be removed from the fellowship of the church and be considered unclean, like the outsiders; this is done to stop the spread of the disease and to eliminate the disease—Rom. 16:17; Titus 3:10.
 - b. Putting other stones in the place of the removed stones (Lev. 14:42a) signifies using other believers (1 Pet. 2:5) to fill in the gap; the replastering of the house with other plaster (Lev. 14:42b) signifies the renewing of the church with new experiences of the Lord's gracious works; this is needed for a new start in the church life.
 - c. The breaking down of the house after the infection of leprosy returns (v. 45) signifies that if the situation of a church reaches the point where it cannot be cured, that church should be terminated (cf. Rev. 2:5).
 - d. If no sin is spreading after the renewing of the

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church with the new experiences of the Lord's gracious works, the church is clean and has no problem; the whole church needs to be cleansed with the eternally efficacious blood of Christ and His eternal and living Spirit so that the church is fully clean to be the mutual dwelling of God and man—Lev. 14:48-53; Heb. 9:14; 10:22; 1 John 1:9; Titus 3:5; John 14:2, 23.