

# Mark 1

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Date: 29 September 2013

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Jesus stepped onto the stage of history as the long-awaited and long-expected hero who would save the world from its deepest need, not its perceived need, not its felt need, but the most significant, central, and substantial need with which it had ever been faced or ever would be faced again. If this story of the world is right, if this picture of existence before a God who made us and from whom we walked away, if this is descriptive of the world in which we live, if God is the king of glory who's been denied everything that was due him, then the only answer was for God to send one who would be both God and king, where rulership and redemption might be found in the same person. If this is true, Jesus' appearance in the backwaters of Judea 2,000 years ago wasn't just another power play by some deranged savior, but was the answer. His appearance in history was what John the Baptist would describe in the first verses of the Gospel of Mark as the coming of one mightier than he, not just another prophet who would be joined in the ranks by the likes of Muhammad and Gandhi, but one mighty to save and worthy to do it, who came not only to cleanse, but also to transform his people,

God's people, God's people, God's creatures from the inside out once again into those who might be reconciled to God. If this is the story, Jesus is the answer. Unlike anyone else in history, Jesus arrived as the Son of God, so that when Jesus showed up, it was actually God showing up to make everything right again.

In the passage we're going to look at today, we're going to see this Jesus bringing a message of hope that drives him into the city to where the people are to proclaim a gospel and to proclaim it in action as well as in words. He preaches, but he also, he drives out demons and he heals the sick and his fame increases, but more over what he does than over what he proclaims. And that becomes precisely the problem, precisely the point at which he is misunderstood when his actions are heard louder than his words.

words. Jesus' message was drowned out by the people's desire for the miracles. People care more about what he can do for them than who he came to be for them. And Jesus is step by step driven out of the city by their misunderstanding into desolate places, into deserted places, the deserts.

In our passage today, we see the spread of Jesus' fame among the people at the loss of their understanding of his true identity.

[ 3 : 5 7 ] They missed it. They missed it. They missed who he was. They missed who he was in three roles that he came to fulfill.

They missed who he was as a teacher. They missed who he was as an exorcist. And they missed who he was as a healer.

We're gonna look at these three roles that Jesus came to fill. But before we do, the question really before us, this time, as we come to the word of God, is, will we miss it to?

Will we miss it too? Will we mistake Jesus' utility for his identity? Will we misunderstand who he was because we're too concerned with what he can do for me?

But before we look at these three roles, would you follow along with me as I read from Mark chapter 1, verses 14 to 39. It can be found on pages 1002 and 1003 of the Red Bibles. Mark 1, 14 to 39.

[ 5 : 16 ] This is God's word. After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. The time has come, he said. The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news.

As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. Come, follow me, Jesus said, and I will make you fishers of men.

At once they left their nets and they followed him. When he had gone a little further, he saw James, son of Zebedee, and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets.

Without delay, he called them. And they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired hands, and they followed him. They went to Capernaum. And when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. Just then a man in their synagogue, who was possessed by an evil spirit, cried out, What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us?

I know who you are, the Holy One of God. Be quiet, said Jesus sternly. Come out of him. The evil spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek. The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, What is this? A new teaching, and with authority. He even gives orders to the evil spirits, and they obey him. News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee.

[ 7 : 12 ] As soon as they left the synagogue, they went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew. Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told Jesus about her. So he went to her, took her by the hand, and helped her up. The fever left her, and she began to wait on them.

That evening after sunset, the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed. The whole town gathered at the door, and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was.

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went out to a solitary place where he prayed. Simon and his companions went to look for him, and when they found him, they exclaimed, everyone is looking for you. Jesus replied, let us go somewhere else, to the nearby villages, so that I can preach there also. That is why I have come. So he traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons. Would you pray with me that God would grant us understanding of his word? Heavenly Father, we ask that in the next 30 minutes or so, you would make clear to us what you are saying through these glimpses of your Son. As we see him and what he did for those around him, may we see him as we ought. May we understand rightly the significance of the signs he performed. May we interpret rightly the miracles he worked, and may we hear him on his own terms for a few precious moments, Lord. Grant us a peculiar sense of sight to see him for who he was, not who we want him to be, not who we think he ought to be. And may we see that who he was is so much greater than we ever make him out to be, when all we can think of is ourselves. May we spread his fame as the God-made man who is to be served, rather than a good that is to be had.

It's in his name again that we pray. Amen. So we witness in these verses, in this passage, Jesus' fame spreading among the people, but at the loss of their understanding his true identity, in these three roles he came to fill, the roles of teacher, of exorcist, and of healer.

Each of these three roles, while it was taken by them to be an end in and of itself, ought to have pointed beyond itself to who Jesus was and what he ultimately came to do.

[ 10 : 29 ] But the crowds missed it. They became enamored with the signs and unwittingly stripped them of their significance.

And I pray, I hope, I beg God that as we look at these verses that it would not be so of us.

That today as we look at this seemingly obscure account of a man who lived two millennia ago, that we would see in it who Jesus is, who he was, who he will be forevermore.

Three roles. First, the people missed who Jesus was in his role as a teacher. We'll pick up in verse 21. It says, They went to Capernaum. Jesus and his new followers go into the city where the people are.

And when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. Now, it would have been typical for someone in Jesus' day, given that he had the right credentials, to go into the synagogue and teach, especially on the Sabbath.

[ 11 : 42 ] The Sabbath was the Jewish Sunday. It was the day that they set apart for worship. And the synagogue was their church. So Jesus showing up to teach wasn't odd.

We see what was odd about it in the next verse. Verse 22 says, The people were amazed. The people were taken back. They were astonished.

I don't know when the last time you stepped into a church was that you came out saying, You were amazed. I can't remember ever being amazed.

Edified, yes. informed, yes. Moved, surely. But not amazed. I haven't had that experience of being amazed.

But it says the people were amazed. And what they were amazed at was, they were amazed at his teaching. It says, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law.

[ 12 : 42 ] Some versions would read that he taught them not as the scribes. The word is grammatous. It's one who writes grammar.

And it's interesting that the people would compare Jesus to the scribes. They say, unlike the scribes, Jesus taught them as one with authority.

You see, a scribe was someone who sat there with a pen in his hand and would record on paper someone else's thoughts. A scribe was someone who would sit and duplicate a document.

They didn't have Xerox's back then. So a scribe's job description was simply to copy someone else's thoughts. It was to be everything but original.

The best scribe was the one to produce the copy with the least variation from the original. It's sort of like what's expected from an undergrad compared with a PhD student.

[ 13 : 48 ] They were expecting that day in the synagogue, like any other Sabbath, an undergrad, to take the platform, to report to them what the scriptures said.

And instead, what they got was a doctor whose familiarity with the scriptures allowed him to expound them around himself, making his original contribution to the world's conception of reality.

Jesus was anything but a copyist. And the people, we're told, were astonished at how he preached as one who had authority.

But the problem is this. The misunderstanding, the mistake, the misconception of who Jesus was is this.

To be amazed at one's teaching because they teach like one who had authority. Is very different than to submit one's life under that teaching because that person is one with authority.

[ 15 : 04 ] The people in their amazement miss the point. This is why later when Jesus begins to teach again, those who heard him were again amazed, but they're just as antagonistic.

And they ask, is this not the carpenter? Where has he gotten this authority? Is he not the son of Mary and the brother of James and Joseph and Judas and Simon?

Where did he get the authority to be original? Who gives him the right to reinterpret our scriptures?

And you've got to ask yourself. You've got to ask yourself. Have you ever elevated Jesus' teaching?

And Jesus' ability to teach? His wit or his ability to cut to the heart of his opponent's argument.

[ 16 : 13 ] Have you elevated Jesus' ability to teach so high that you've slipped into astonishment at the cost of obedience? I'll tell you what, this is especially difficult.

This is especially difficult for me. I slip into this all the time. The more and more you hear the words of Jesus, the more and more you realize just how deeply they actually go.

And if you're not careful, you begin to turn his words more into a puzzle to be cracked than a standard to which you were meant to conform.

Your astonishment, my astonishment, if that's what it comes to, can turn very quickly into antagonism as the puzzle of his words becomes primary and the power of his words is lost.

Speaking a few years ago, before his resignation, he was speaking to the evangelical church in Germany.

[ 17 : 24 ] The Catholic Pope Benedict addressed the German church regarding their founder, Martin Luther. This was some 500 years after Luther had lived and ministered.

And if you know anything about the history of Luther and the German church, you know just how significant this moment must have been because it was under Luther that the German church was founded when it broke away from the Catholic church.

So the Pope is speaking about this man's theology, his pursuit to understand God and Jesus and the Bible.

And his words speak to this danger of separating who Jesus is from what he does. The Pope said of Luther, here's his words, What constantly exercised him was the question of God, the deep passion and driving force of his whole life's journey.

How do I receive the grace of God? This question struck him in the heart and lay at the foundation of all his theological searching and inner struggle.

[ 18 : 38 ] For Luther, Benedict says, Theology, understanding God, knowing God, was no mere academic pursuit, but the struggle for oneself, which in turn was a struggle for and with God.

For Luther, Jesus didn't turn into a puzzle to be cracked, but remained a sovereign to whom one must conform.

Jesus' teaching never lost its power. And if we're to come to Christ, if we're to come to Jesus, if we're to come to the words Jesus spoke and the words that were spoken about him, we must never lose sight of Jesus himself.

This must strike us in the heart and lay at the foundation of all our searching and struggle for and with God and for his Son.

We cannot be content to snuff him off as one who taught like he had authority, but if we are to understand him for who he was, we must bow before him as one in whom all authority has been wrapped up.

[ 20 : 05 ] They misunderstood his role as a teacher. This is the first of Jesus' roles to be the people misunderstood. It's often the first role that we misunderstand as we cling to some part of Jesus' teaching and divorce it from everything that he was speaking about, everything that he was saying through it.

The second role that's misunderstood is his role as an exorcist, as one who has the authority to drive out demons.

And I just have to ask, does that sit well with you? Does that sit well with you? I mean, the whole bit about unclean spirits and demon possession, think about that for a second.

In our day and age, we've been taught to run the skeptic's gamut at anything that we cannot taste or touch or feel. We've been told that anything outside the physical can only be accepted by the religiously fanatical.

But is that true? Is that really true? I wonder if we've gone too far. I suspect I would say we've gone too far.

[ 21 : 26 ] I mean, for sure, Jesus wasn't too far off when he compared the spiritual realm to the wind. You can feel its effects, a breeze pushing up against your face.

But you can't feel the wind. You can't see the wind. You try catching it, for instance. You go outside on a windy day, and you hold up your jar, and you cap it.

Open it again. Have you caught the wind? No, you haven't. You can't catch the wind. It's a little like that with the spiritual realm.

You can't see it. But if the spiritual realm is real, you sure can feel its effect, can't you?

You sure can. There's something inside of us that points towards more than just the physical. I mean, these are the deepest questions in philosophy right now, the philosophy of the mind, of how the mind, something immaterial, is generated by this gray matter that is sitting in our heads.

[ 22 : 37 ] There's something in us that tells us there's more than just what we see and taste and touch. So before dismissing this piece of Jesus, look at what happens after he's done teaching.

Verse 23 says, Just then, a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit cried out, and you could see the effects of the spiritual realm. He cried out, What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth?

Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God. Somehow this spirit, as threatened as he was with Jesus, understood who he was dealing with.

It understood what Jesus was after him, how this was bound up with who Jesus was as the Holy One of God. It was right for this unclean spirit, this demon, this force inside of this person to be afraid.

But what did Jesus do? He rebuked him, saying, Be quiet, and come out of him. And the evil spirit, we're told in verse 26, shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek.

[ 23 : 59 ] You see, there's something about who Jesus was and what he came to do that pitted him against the spiritual realm of darkness. There's something that placed him squarely in opposition to the demonic forces of evil.

It's bound up with his identity. But you need to hear Jesus' message or else you'll miss the meaning of his miracles. Remember what Jesus had said.

He came in verses 14 and 15, preaching the good news that God was breaking into the world to make all things new, saying, the time has come.

The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe in the good news. This wasn't about freeing the oppressed so that they could live their own little autonomous lives doing whatever they wanted, living out their inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

We would speak of it in the States. This was the inauguration of a kingdom, the winning back of God's world. This was the freeing of captives to return to God, to serve him, rather than the demons under whose control they had fallen.

[ 25 : 20 ] You see, when Jesus came expelling the forces of evil, he did it as an inauguration of his kingship. Many of you may know the story of the Count of Monte Cristo from the film a few years back.

Edmund Dante, a poor ship hand, rises by fate to the prominence as a captain of a ship. But he's soon done in by several of those around him, jealous to see him destroyed.

Dante is imprisoned for 14 years in the Chateau d'If, where the innocent prisoners of France are kept out of sight and out of mind.

There, though, another prisoner, an old man by then, miscalculates his escape by tunnel and ends up burrowing right into Dante's cell. And for the next years, as they work together to tunnel toward the outer wall of the prison, this old man, a priest, he calls him, this old man teaches the uneducated Dante all that he knows with the one stipulation that once he escapes, he will use what he has learned for good and not for evil.

Yet, when Dante finally escapes, he devotes the whole of his life to wreaking revenge on the men who had him imprisoned. In the movie, in the movie, his revenge is glorified.

[ 26 : 53 ] But if you go back and read Dumas' book, you find that the ten years of Dante's revenge ultimately bring him nothing.

He doesn't win back his love. He doesn't live happily ever after. He sails off into the sunset as a wanderer upon the seas.

In many ways, Dante's misused freedom displays his misunderstanding of the opportunity that had been given him.

He thought that the freedom was his ticket to play the role of providence. And if you read critiques of Dante's work, this is exactly what they see in it.

He took on himself the role of providence to fulfill in himself the shoes of God. But in the end, taking on the task of exacting vengeance on his enemies undid the very freedom he was given.

[ 28 : 03 ] And he ends, ironically, as a prisoner of the seas. Many of us look at Jesus as a quick fix, a pragmatic answer to our present needs.

If he can expel our demons, great, rid us of them and let us be about the business we were doing before. But the freedom Jesus offers was never meant to be our path to anarchy.

It was meant to bring us back under the rule of God that we were made for. The people nearby in the account, they don't get this, they miss it. When the unclean spirit comes out of the man, verse 27 says, the people were again also amazed that they asked each other, what is this, a new teaching and with authority?

He even gives orders to the evil spirits and they obey him. News about him spreads quickly. His fame for what he was doing spreads quickly. His fame spread over the whole region of Galilee.

You see, if we don't hear Jesus' message, we can never hope to understand his miracles and we'll inevitably spend our whole lives living with broken expectations of what we thought Jesus should do for us, even though that's never what he came to do.

[ 29 : 27 ] And it's not that our vision of Jesus is in danger of being too grand. this is important. It's that our vision of Jesus is in danger of being too trite.

We don't see enough of him. It's not that we see the whole of him and we dismiss it. The other side of this is the third role the people misunderstand.

not only do they mistake Jesus' role as the authoritative spokesman of God for being a mere teacher, not only do they misunderstand him as the one come to inaugurate the kingdom of God for his being a mere exorcist, but they also mistake his role as the restorer of God's created order for his being a mere healer.

The people miss who he is once again behind what he does predominantly because they see what he does as largely being done for them and it's not.

They're not the center of the story. Now in some ways you might think that it's odd that Mark goes from demons to diseases. I mean, if he's trying to climax the story, aren't spirits, especially evil ones, a lot more serious than sickness?

[ 31 : 09 ] That's what I would think if I was trying to climax the story. You might be thinking, hey, he can get rid of the demons. Why couldn't he get rid of our sickness too?

Our diseases should be no problem. And it's more anticlimactic than climactic. But remember what Mark is trying to do as we look at this.

He's trying to cut a line between Jesus as a good, as the provider of services, and Jesus as God who is to be served.

In a lot of ways, then, it's right to save the question of health for last because our diseases, our health is much closer to home than our demons.

You see, many of us can live with demons. Sometimes we're the ones who invite demons into our lives and we'll often walk hand in hand with them as long as they're beneficial in some way.

[ 32 : 08 ] We'll strap ourselves to money or power or bathe ourselves in pornography or fantasies or ecstasies because it feels good and we'll live with the demons attached to them.

but you'll never hear anyone talk about making a deal with cancer. When Jesus not only casts out our demons but he'll rid us of our sickness too, now the real danger of turning him into a commodity is on the table.

The power to make us comfortable for our own sake, that's something that will sell. That's something that we could pack this place with almost instantaneously.

This is why in something as trite as the old Indiana Jones movie, the Nazis are on a quest for the Holy Grail. Do you remember why they were after it?

Because they believed that the Holy Grail contained the ability to bring them eternal life. It was some sort of fountain of youth, a cure for all their diseases and an answer to their finiteness.

[ 33 : 25 ] And they were willing to kill in order to procure it. They were willing to engross themselves, even in the occult, and to play with demons, but by any means needed to escape their diseases.

If Jesus had the power to heal, you see, now that's something marketable, and people do make millions off of marketing Jesus. as the one who can take care of our deepest physical needs.

When Mark makes his point, he does so, though, through a contrast. And we need to see this. You've got to pick up on it. Look at verse 29.

It says, as soon as they left the synagogue where he had just driven out this demon, they went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew. These are the guys who he called at the beginning of the passage to come follow him.

And Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever and they told Jesus about her. So he went to her, took her by the hand, and helped her up. And the fever left her. You see, he has the authority to heal, but that's not what's at issue.

[ 34 : 36 ] The question is, why does he heal? We're given a glimpse at the end of that verse. It says, others would translate this, and she began to serve them, and wouldn't see this as some passing remark, but an intricate piece of understanding why Jesus heals.

You see, healing was not an end in itself. Time and again in Jesus' ministry, people treat healing like it's an end in itself, but it's not. We're healed, not for ourselves, but for him.

We're healed, not for ourselves, but to serve Jesus and those who are following him. And therefore, it's his prerogative when he heals, and when he doesn't.

If that continues today, it's not something we bring before him and demand as our inalienable right. It's something he does when he does it, and he does it for a purpose.

His own purpose. And it's not something we can shake our fist at him and say, you don't heal me, and I don't believe in you. To do so would be foolish.

[ 35 : 56 ] I won't make too much of that right now, but we have to see the contrast. Look at verse 32. On the other side of the coin, it says that in the evening after sunset, the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon possessed.

The whole town gathered at the door, and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons. Then this aside, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was.

And after this, after Jesus began to heal people, now his fame really spreads. Word about Jesus went everywhere. But what about that bit about not permitting the demons to speak?

Why wouldn't he want people to know that even the demons understood him to be the Holy One of God? Why shut them up? Here's the best answer for it that I've come across.

The way to understand why he would want to cover his identity is because at the end of it, people became so focused on what Jesus was doing that he didn't want them to know his true identity.

[ 37 : 04 ] If they knew he was the son of God, the one promised to restore the world to its original grandeur and free God's people from their demonic and diseased lives, all of a sudden they'd blow that up too and turn even his identity into something to be sold.

You see, Jesus doesn't want people to learn who he is from the mouths of demons, or for that matter, anyone who would turn him into a commodity. He wants to be the one himself to interpret his identity.

And soon enough in Mark's gospel he'll do just that, and he'll do it by marking a path to the cross. And ironically it will be on account of the cross, where man's greatest need meets God's greatest answer that so many people would and will and continue to turn away and dismiss Jesus' identity.

Why? Because the cross isn't marketable. If our comfort is the standard by which we pass judgment, the cross isn't marketable. You see this on TV, these marketing schemes, right?

I can sell you something today that will flatten your stomach if I tell you that by having a flat stomach I can get you the person you want. And by getting you the person you want, I will make you happy.

[ 38 : 33 ] And by being happy you will be fulfilled and this will be the end of life. You can't sell a cross that way. Especially when a follower is called to go the way of the cross themselves.

The cross isn't marketable. Yet the cross is where Jesus is headed, even at the conclusion of this passage. Look at verse 35. It says, very early in the morning while it was still dark Jesus got up, left the house and went out to a solitary place where he prayed.



Simon and his companions went to look for him. And when they found him they exclaimed, everyone is looking for you. Isn't it great? Look at your fame. But Jesus replied, let us go somewhere else to preach.

So he traveled throughout all Galilee preaching in their synagogues driving out demons. In the very next passage you see again though that the people don't get it. As soon as he heals another person he's mobbed as the news spreads and it says so that Jesus could no longer openly enter a town.

He could no longer be in the city where the people were at but was out in the desolate places. He's pushed out from the city to minister in the desert. This is what happens when we turn Jesus into something to be sold and bought.

[ 39 : 58 ] When we make his ministry into the good news of comfort or prosperity or health or wealth or riches or feel-good Christianity, we miss the real point.

We miss Jesus' interpretation of the cross. That why he came to save, why he came to drive out demons, to heal the sick.

We miss the power to overcome disease. We miss the power to overcome persecution.

We miss the power to ultimately overcome even ourselves. And we miss his kingdom, thinking that it's all about us when it's not.

It's actually all about him. not what he does, not what he might do for me, but about him. And you've got to watch out for separating in your heart what Jesus does from what he says, because it's his words that interpret for us his actions.

[ 41 : 06 ] And the question becomes, what is the corrective? What's the corrective? And this is where we end. Where do we see how to get it right? For that, we have to go back to the beginning of the passage, to those verses we skipped over.

Remember Jesus calling his disciples. It's in verse 16. As Jesus walked, he called to Andrew and Simon as they were casting their nets, come follow me.

I will make you fishers of men. At once, they leave them, that's their livelihood. They left their livelihood behind to follow Jesus. And when he had gone a little farther, he saw James, the son of Zebedee, and John, and he says, come, follow me.

And they left their father in the boat. That's their earthly ties. They left their family to follow Jesus. And now, if Jesus, Lord of the universe, decides to cast out a demon, or to heal a disease, now it's not about me.

As a follower of him, it's not about me, it's about him. It's not about the miracle, it's about the message that this is Jesus, the son of God, who has brought the kingdom near, and to whom we are healed to serve along with the other who follow him.

[ 42 : 28 ] This is Jesus who calls us to follow. I just want to get practical for a second before we sing from Psalm 72. And I just want to get practical in three ways.

if nothing else, this means that if we're really going to understand Jesus, what we need more than anything else is to hear him on his own terms.

We have a knack for dissecting the Bible and taking out what we like and leaving what we don't. And we can be a little bit like Gandhi in that sense.

He was like this. He loved the Sermon on the Mount, but he couldn't recontextualize it into the book in which it was found where Jesus was also the one who kings came to worship and who by the end of the book all worship is due.

We love to dissect and pull and nitpick our way to Jesus, to a Jesus who is all about me. But if we're going to understand Jesus' healings, exorcism, teaching, we have to understand him on his own terms.

[ 43 : 44 ] We need to read his ministry of healing and exorcism back in its original context. We need to familiarize ourselves with the story of scripture.

Some of you here today don't know that story. it's far from you. But that's where you find who Jesus is.

Secondly, if we want to do more than merely understand who Jesus was, we'd be good to learn the lesson that Luther seems to have learned. That to separate the gap between the head and the heart, to stop making the puzzle the end, of cracking the words and arguing the finite points.

Not that finite points are bad to be argued, but when we take those as excuse to not understand the Jesus or bow before him in obedience, then they're not worth very much.

And we could learn the lesson of Luther, who sees this as the struggle of life. God's love.

[ 44 : 59 ] Lastly, if we're going to overcome the distance between the head and the heart, if you're going to understand, overcome that, you have to ask yourself at the end of the day, what shoreline is Jesus walking up to in your life?

And saying, here, this, this is it. This is it. This is the net you have to drop behind you. And it may be like Peter, it may be your livelihood, giving up your status as a fisherman, what you've put so much stake in.

It may be like James and John, not only leaving your livelihood, but leaving your family ties. Perhaps you've only been content to ride the family boat. And at some point, you have to start thinking for yourself.

Is this the story that defines your life? For me, the shore that Jesus walked up to was the one of security, earthly security.

I'm a planner. I like that. Maybe some of you would resonate with me on that front. I'm a planner. I like to be in control.

[ 46 : 18 ] So what does Jesus do? He walks up and says, you're not going to be in control. If you walked into our house on a night and we were maybe playing a board game, which we do often enough, the only thing I like more than beating Catherine bad is at the end of the night being able to take all the pieces and put them back in their little compartments in the box and put the box together and put it on the shelf.

And at least with the chaos of life, I know that this little world is under my control. And that's the shoreline that God shows up and says, well, I'm taking you to Scotland and you're not going to be able to do anything and we'll see how much security you find apart from me.

And you have to ask what the shoreline is that Jesus walks up to and says, this, this here, this is what you're putting before me. This is where you see that you're taking my teaching, my healing, my exorcism, my power, my authority, and you're warping it around yourself.

And I have to ask where it is. We're going to sing Psalm 72 and it's in a lot of ways for the book of Psalms a climax.

It highlights the rise of David's kingdom to its peak under his son Solomon. But it's a climax that in many ways looks forward to a fall of that kingdom when it would break apart piece by piece.

[ 47 : 56 ] In Psalm 72, Solomon paints a picture of a king too big for him to fill. He can't step into those shoes. And he anticipates another king to come.

Would you sing then, stand and sing Psalm 72 and sing Psalms on page 92 and 93 in the blue book. We're going to sing to the tune of Rockingham verses 1 to 4 and then 11 to 15.

And think of who that king might be as we sing. We'll stand and sing. with justice, Lord, the royal sun with righteousness.

The people, your afflicted ones, He'll judge with truth and uprightness.

Then mountains will bring peace to them that helps the fruit of righteousness.

[ 49 : 32 ] He will be heard and save the poor and crush all those who dare rest.

All kings will harm me come to Him, and nations worship Him with fear.

He'll save the needy when they call the poor for whom no help is near.

He will take peace beyond the weak and save them from oppressive might.

He'll rescue them from violence. their blood is precious in His sight.

[ 51 : 18 ] His sight. He will be heard and save them from the poor and the poor. He will be heard and save them from the poor and the poor. may He will be heard and save them from the poor. may He will make sheep of stone begin to Him abundantly.

May people ever pray for Him and bless His name continually.

May people ever pray for Him and bless His name continually.

Not as one who can astonish us with His arguments, His teaching, or as one who will cast out our demons at our beck and call, or heal us from the suffering of this world so that we can be comfortable.

But we crown Him as Lord of all. To Him be the glory and the honor forever. Amen.