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Title: The Gospel of Jesus Christ in Galilee - Early Galilean Ministry - The Servant's Ministry  
Text: Mark 1:29-34  
Theme: Jesus has power over doctrine, demons, and disease.

**BIG PICTURE:**

- The Servant's Message (1:14, 15)
- The Servant's Men (1:16-20)
- The Servant's Ministry - His authority established (1:21-34)
  - by doctrinal truth (vv. 21, 22)
  - by demonic activity (vv. 23-28)
  - **by diseased sufferer (vv. 29-34)**

"By healing different diseases he shows that he has brought true life into the world." <http://www.ccel.org/g/geneva/notes/Mark/1.html>

Jesus shows Himself mighty to save. He gives hope, healing, and wholeness to all who come. There are two overarching thoughts that can summarize the paragraph. First, note how numerous the patients were. Second, note how powerful the physician was.

Passages like this leave us longing for the day when God will once more immediately and directly touch us with full and instant health. Consider the following three questions:

**Questions:**

1. Does Jesus still deliver us from our diseases?
2. Should we pray expecting deliverance from diseases?
3. Can all healing be attributed to God?

In this text the Holy Spirit desires to communicate for us three ideas.

**To Know:** The Holy Spirit desires for us to know that Jesus has absolute authority over physical sickness.

**To Choose:** The Holy Spirit desires for us to choose Him as our Great Physician.

**To Feel:** The Holy Spirit desires for us to feel love for the Lord Jesus as our Great Physician.

**The Narrative and Healing**

The wording of verse 29 tells us the event follows in sequence. Again, let us not forget the movement of this short study. He teaches, casts out a demon, and enters the home of the sick and heals. Our Lord easily moves from one event to the next. He mingles with all regardless as to station or status.

Peter's mother-in-law (29-31), all that were diseased (32), all the city (33 - **ola a polis** - (totality)) came to Jesus. Note the progression of thought.

The power of our Lord is clearly seen in the healing of those who suffered.

"The mention of these four—which is peculiar to Mark—is the first of those traces of Peter's hand in this Gospel, of which we shall find many more. The house being his, and the illness and cure so nearly affecting himself, it is interesting to observe this minute specification of the number and names of the witnesses; interesting also as the first occasion on which the sacred triumvirate of Peter and James and John are selected from among the rest, to be a threefold cord of testimony to certain events in their Lord's life (see on Mr 5:37)—Andrew being present on this occasion, as the occurrence took place in his own house." <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/jamieson/jfb.xi.ii.ii.html>

"This is the first instance of a recurrent occurrence in Mark's narrative: throngs of people gather near Jesus for healing or for instruction with twofold consequence: (a) growing acclaim of his miraculous powers spreads far and wide; (b) the pressure of the crowd surrounding him threatens to crush Jesus." <http://www.ioa.com/~cwconrad/Mark/>

#### 1. Peter's Mother-in-law (vv. 29-31)

The verb form used for "in bed" to describe her condition is in the imperfect tense, "speaking of continuous action or state in past time. She had been sick for some time." (Kenneth S. Wuest, Wuest's Word Studies, [Eerdmans, 1973], 1:36)

The word "fever" is a present tense participle. She was burning up with a fever.

"The cure must have been instantaneous, to make it possible for Peter's mother-in-law to cook a meal for the Lord and the men He had with Him. The verb is in the imperfect tense, showing progressive action. She went to serving them. It took some time to prepare the meal." (Kenneth S. Wuest, Wuest's Word Studies, [Eerdmans, 1973], 1:37)

"Observe, How complete the cure was; when *the fever left her*, it did not, as usual, leave her *weak*, but the same hand that *healed* her, *strengthened* her, so that she was able to *minister* to them; **the cure is in order to that, to fit for action, that we may minister to Christ, and to those that are his for his sake.**"

<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/henry/mhc5.Mark.ii.html> (italicized words are his, bold word and underlined are added)

God does not heal us in order for us to get on with our lives, but to fulfill His eternal purpose.

#### 2. All that were diseased (vv. 32-34)

"It was the Sabbath that day, as shown by the fact that the synagogue meeting was being held. The Sabbath closed at sunset, and so the people were at liberty to bring their sick ones." (Kenneth S. Wuest, Wuest's Word Studies, [Eerdmans, 1973], 1:37)

“They waited until the Sabbath was over (after sunset) before carrying anything (see Jer. 17:21-22).” (NIV Study Bible on Mark 1:32).

The whole town gathered. They heard of Him who heals with but a word spoken, a touch extended. Their motive for coming was to be healed, but they came in faith believing He could heal.

**“The statement forms a summarizing conclusion to his overall ministry.** Altogether, 1:29-34 tells us why the kingdom is good news: people are healed and set free. One strong form of future hope among the prophets and later Jewish writings is that God will bring liberation and healing. We find it in Isaiah 61:1; 35:5-6; 29:18-19 and elsewhere. Here in Jesus’ ministry it is happening. **So the events are important both in themselves and in what they symbolize.”**

<http://wwwstaff.murdoch.edu.au/~loader/MkEpiphany5.htm> (emphasis added)

### The Theology of Healing

As we think about His authority over diseased suffering there are four observations we can make.

1. All healing is either from God through immediate and direct action (i.e. the suspending of natural laws) or through secondary and indirect action (i.e. herbs, foods, rest, or the medical profession [1 Tim. 5:23]).

Whether we are aware of His activity or not, we are to affirm that God is behind all healing and health. It is an injustice when sickness is a sign of unbelief. To accuse the sick of lacking healing faith is monstrous and is a blight in various expressions of professing Christianity.

Even the activity of Satan to heal in Revelation 13:1-4, 12 is a work permitted by God.

2. God gave the “gifts of healing” by the Spirit to some within the church (1 Cor. 12:9, 28, 30).

This is the only time this word (**iama**) is used outside of the Gospels or in any other letters. A sister word from the same word family is found in Hebrews 12:13, James 5:16, and 1 Peter 2:24.

Whatever this might look like, I can pretty much tell you that it does not look like what we see and hear on TV. No gift is given for the financial profiting of the individual and the scandalous victimizing of Christ’s body.

The word “therapy” for “healing” is always used in and by the Gospel writers and is never used outside the Gospel and in the letters whether Pauline or otherwise.

The presence of healing outside of the Gospels is thin, but this should not force us to conclude that it does not happen. I have no reason to think God is not behind healing, but how it happened in the Gospels and how it happens today might look significantly different.

3. God can heal all He wills to heal, but does not will for all to be healed. This is a mystery.

It is proper to pray to God for healing. He has the power and will to fulfill His purpose in your life. Sometimes this includes health and at other times it includes sickness. This is to be embraced by faith. Near the end of his ministry Paul could not heal Trophimus (2 Tim. 4:20).

4. All sickness and all health have a reason in existing.

It is a fallacy to believe that God does not desire for you and I to be sick, diseased, or die. God uses our weakness to show Himself strong. We are to believe this by faith. Second Corinthians 12:5-10 speaks of Paul's request to be healed of his "thorn" and God's response.

5. We are to trust Him in sickness and in health.

The only right response to chronic illness is to believe that God has a purpose for it.

APPLICATION: (What's the NEXT STEP?)

In light of His absolute authority what is your response to Him? Who He is and what He does is just as real today as it was then? What will your response be to Him?

1. Are you asking God to heal you through whatever means He chooses?
2. Are you willing to submit yourself to the prayers of others in your behalf?
3. Are you willing to accept God's response?
4. Let us pray for the despairing, the diseased, and the dysfunctional. Let us see such prayer as a real ministry to the body of Christ.