

Peter's Mother-in-Law

Mark 1:29 -31

We're looking at the gospel of Mark.

Mark is an unusual gospel is the show or one. It's the first one that was written. It is not chronological, but it is a haphazard assortment of stories that mark picked up from Peter and later wrote down. He didn't try to write it down in chronological order. He was simply telling the story of Jesus. And we wanted to choose mark. As the example of the gospels, we're going to focus on, we are looking at lives that were transformed, life changing and counters with the Lord Jesus Christ. And that's what mark has talked about. Uh, all through the gospel. You'll find him encountering people that met Jesus and their lives for forever ever changed. God wants you to know that when Jesus comes into your heart and life, he wants to change you folks. He doesn't want it to go on the same old way.

Jesus doesn't want you to be the same old person you were last year or the year before or 10 years ago. When you meet Jesus, things should start to change because he wants to get his hands in your life. He wants to put his fingers in there and mix it up and fix it and correct it. And he's doing that. All these sun, these, as we talk about these life changing encounters with the Lord, Jesus Christ, we've listed 31 of them and you can find them on our website. I think it's up to 31 individuals mention in Mark's Gospel. Of those 41, 31 had their lives forever changed. However many you find, and if you took all the gospels, the book of Acts, and the Epistles, you will probably find hundreds of people that were touched by Jesus. We're going to focus on a few. This morning we are going to be looking at one.

This is an unusual one. We normally think we ought pick the pick the big passages and preach on those. But God says he has ordained that all scripture is inspired by God, all scriptures, given that we might learn from it and know from it.

We are going to be looking at an unusual situation of

The Healing of Peter's Mother-in-law.

As I began this series, I said, you know, there are humorous things that take place in the Gospel of Mark. And I can't wait to someday meet mark. He was a very young man and we talked about him fleeing the garden of Gethsemane and he, it in, I think it's **Mark 14:51-52**, where somebody grabs the, uh, the sheet that he was had wrapped around him. And he runs away naked.

Perhaps you don't find that funny. I see the humor in it. I think as we come to this particular story, there's some humor here. There's some tongue and cheek hints. There's some understanding we ought to have Jesus in this story, heals a mother-in-law.

As a matter of fact it was very common to speak of mother-in-laws even back in Jesus day. One Roman poet, Decimus Janius Juvenalis, was a satirist and often wrote about women. Concerning mother-in-laws and he said.

“You can't be happy while your mother-in-law is still alive.”

And we know that's all in. I jest and humor because even a lot of our comedies on TV are about mother-in-laws everybody's watch everybody loves Raymond and the buttinski mother-in-law lives next door gets involved. Fortunately, not all mother-in-laws are that way, nor did we intend them to be, but the hub is there.

There are other comedians that talk about mother-in-laws things like, uh, behind every successful man stands a devoted wife and a surprised mother-in-law.

Adam and Eve were the happiest and luckiest couple in the world as neither of them had a mother-in-law.

Does it really surprise anyone that there is a mother-in-law's day and it occurs less than one week before Halloween.

In his *Satires* (specifically Satire VI, "The Women of Rome"), the Roman poet Juvenal famously expresses intense hostility towards mothers-in-law, declaring that peace in a marriage is impossible while the wife's mother is alive.

He characterizes them as meddlesome, corrupting influences who encourage their daughters to act immoral and cruel.

Humor and jokes about one's mother-in-law (the mother of one's spouse) are a mainstay of comedy. The humor is based on the premise that the average mother-in-law considers her son-in-law to be unsuitable for her daughter (or daughter-in-law unsuitable for her son) and may be rude, overbearing, obnoxious, and unattractive.

many television sitcoms have featured stereotypical mothers-in-law.

Best Mother-In-Law Jokes

**#3 What do you call it if you're late for dinner at your mother-in-law's?
Delaying the inedible.**

**#5 Why did the mother-in-law cross the road?
She thought it was a boundary.**

#6 In the story of Adam and Eve, Adam didn't have a mother-in-law... he really did live in paradise, didn't he!

**#7 Jon said: "My mother-in-law is an angel."
"You're a lucky fella," Andy replied, "mine's still alive!"**

**#8 What's the difference between outlaws and in-laws?
Outlaws are Wanted.**

#9 I haven't spoken to my mother-in-law in six months... I don't like to interrupt her.

With that open your to Mark 1:29-31.

Mark wants us to see real lives that are touched by Jesus and change transforms forever different. Mark chapter one is the starting place. We're going to look to two other gospels as well because the story unfolds as other gospel writers. Talk about the same incident Mark 1:29 to 31,

“As soon as they left the synagogue”, pause for a moment.

Remember our context, Jesus has been baptized by John. He comes back to Galilee in the north. He goes to Nazareth. Then he goes to the sea of Galilee where he calls some of his disciples. It's there, that they introduce him to the little town of Capernaum. The very next day is the Sabbath day. Saturday. He goes into the synagogue in Capernaum. He delivers a man that was demon possessed at church in the synagogue immediately upon that is the invitation to come to Peter's home. As soon as it 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 hand and helped her up. The fever left her and she to waited on them.

The second view is from Matthew 8:14-17. Matthew talks about the same story, but a little more information, a little differently stated is presented. When Jesus came into Peter's house, he saw Peter's mother lying in the bed with a fever. He touched her hand and the fever left her and she got up and began to wait on them.

Then the third view is from Luke 4:38-39, Luke is the physician. Luke is a medical doctor. He is Luke. And that later writes the book of acts and he describes things in a medical way. He gives us a little more detail. Jesus left the synagogue and went to the home of Simon. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever.

The Greek there says a mega fever. Luke was a physician. He is giving us his professional opinion about the fever.

They begged, they pleaded with Jesus to help her. And so he bent over and rebuked the fever and it left her. And she got up at once and began to wait on all of them.

The Place – Let's look at the place where this occurred.

We look first of all at the place, and most of us have not grown up in Palestine. So we're not familiar with maps. And I want to give you a map this morning to help you understand it. I want to talk a little bit about Capernaum, and then we want to talk about some of the things that were taking place there and then zoom in on Peter's house and get an idea of what that was all about. Capernaum was a fishing village.

The Sea of Galilee

It was along the Sea of Galilee. As a matter of fact it was about a thousand feet long and it was right along the shore. Most of the people in town were fishermen. They dug an archeological site and they found a great tank with, with two tubs in which the fishermen would take and sort their fish, clean them, and then prepare them to be sold down and Magdala, which was about 10 miles to the south. The population in Magdala was 40,000, but the population in Capernaum, small fishing village was about a thousand to 1500 people.

Not a very big place. Most of us, when we think of Jesus in his hometown, we think of Nazareth because he was born there. He was raised there at least till he was 12 years old, maybe until he was 30, he was there, but the scriptures make it very clear that Jesus left Nazareth. And in several of the scriptures, we find out why we'll talk about that the moment. But Jesus left Nazareth.

The Highway

It was a very small town, but it was an important town because of its location. There was a highway that ran through Palestine. When I say Palestine, I mean, Israel, at this time it was Palestine. And it goes from Egypt down in this corner, passes the Gaza strip and goes diagonally across up to the Sea of Galilee.

The Sea of Galilee is shaped pear. It's about 13 miles long and 7 miles wide. Then, because they didn't have a bridge, they had to go around to the north around and reached Capernaum. They went over to this side and then on up to Damascus. So this was a town that was right on a very important highway. It was also important because it was a juncture between two provinces. We'd call them states.

At that time, they divided it up and Galilee was one state. And on the other side was another state. And it ran right through that dividing line where, where Capernaum is.

Tax Collectors – A Toll Booth

They had a tax collection booth that was there starting to put it together. Remember in our story, just so few versus from now, Jesus is going to pass by a guy at the receipt of customs. (Mark 2:14, Matthew 9:9, Luke 5:27-28) This was the toll booth. He's on the highway and he's collecting taxes. The tax collector's name was Matthew or Levi.

Have any of you ever gone to New Jersey, you ought to, and you ought to travel on the Garden State Parkway because then you'll get a feel for what this highway was like. It's highway robbery in New Jersey. Back in the 1960s-70s if you got on the Garden State Parkway, about every five miles, you'd have to stop. I mean, literally it's in the road. It's blockaded and they got these toll booths. You have to pull along the side the booth and throw a quarter into the basket. I remember I had an old car and the window was broken. It wouldn't wind down. So I'd have to open my door and throw it out and hit the tank. It was weird and aggravating that every five miles you'd pay a toll.

This is the way it was in Palestine. The government was making money and some of the Jews were involved in that. And they were the toll booth takers. They were the ones collecting the money. Matthew was one of those. And he happened to live into per as well. So he was the toll collector on his highway. As we look at Capernaum, we see some other important things about it.

The Centurion (see Matthew 8:5-13 just preceding entering Peter's house)

We see there was an army barracks there of about a hundred soldiers. There was a captain over them. He's called a Centurion. And he was a mercenary. That is, he did this for profit. That's why he was in the army. He wasn't there because he loved his nation. He was there because he loved money. And he was very wealthy. This young soldier loved Israel and loved the Jews. And he was well known in Capernaum. He built them a synagogue. He didn't have one. They were too small to have one, but he paid for the whole thing and built it. Now think about that. Wouldn't it be nice to have a few centurions in our congregation? So instead of trying to get everybody involved in and giving toward the, the fund, we could have one Centurion paid for it all. Now, actually, that wouldn't be good because then we'd be dependent on someone else. And they were, but they thanked him.

And that's in scripture because the Centurion had a son that was sick and Jesus needed to heal him. And the disciples came and said, you need to do this. Because he loves our people. And he's done a lot for us. That was all in caper.

The Synagogue

But there was another thing when I talk about that synagogue that was in caper, that synagogue was built of the salt lava type rocks that were dark. They were black. And that's what the whole region was about. So when they went on to build something, they took the rocks out of the ground and they built, they built this synagogue out of black rock. That's the synagogue in which Jesus did the miracle of casting out of demons. He cast out that first demon in that situation, in that guy that synagogue housed, maybe a few hundred people. It did have a balcony for women.

It had a place for men. It had little, little, we call them pews, but they're not they're little, uh, columns that sat up. They built stadium seating on the sides made of concrete (no padded pews here). It was a fascinating place because that's where the people worshipped. When Jesus came in town it was a Sabbath so that was the first place he went to. He went to the black basalt synagogue to worship God.

Peter's House

But the other thing that's fascinating about Capernaum was immediately upon Jesus leaving the synagogue. Where does he go? It says, when he left the synagogue. Jesus went with John and James to the house of Peter and Andrew.

Now to me, that's not really fascinating when I first read it. But as I did research, I found out recent archeological digs have found the house of Peter. As a matter of fact, it's always been there since the time of Peter, perhaps Peter was involved in building it or maybe even Jesus helped to build that house or put additions on it. Now it's not a house like we think of, we think of a house as a split level home with a nice doorway in the front and a two car garage and a genie automatic garage door opener, upper. They didn't have that. And it didn't even look anything like that.

Their houses were built in little communes and in Capernaum there would've been several little communes representing families, extended families that lived together. The, the first unit was built and then the next

one next to it and family members, like it says Peter's house, but it was also Andrew's house.

That is Peter had a house lodging. Andrew had a lodging, Andrew father and Peter's father had a lodging. And perhaps there were other brothers or sisters, if they weren't married and moved on, they would be living in that same place. As you would approach this house, there is a street in the streets rather narrow. So there's an indentation in front with one door to gain access. You don't gain access to the house. You gain access to the courtyard. You see the door, the one door that gives you access to that. Family is through the main door. And that main door opens up and you see a courtyard and on either side are the houses, little houses are dwelling places where mostly people slept and they'd have a living room. But all the cooking was done outside. There would be a millstone where would grind their grain and produce their flour and then cook their food.

They would have an oven outside. They would have a stove outside and probably a fireplace. Then out back, they were lean-to's where sometimes in the hot summer it would get to about 95, a hundred degrees. People would sleep out there instead of in the hot houses. Um, and the, they would also cook under there when it was wet outside. Now the houses didn't have pitched roofs like ours. These houses were flat. They put logs across this way and then smaller logs across this way. And then they filled in between with, some mud and straw and then they baked it and then they rolled it. So was really hard. And did it again. So it was impervious to the weather now, to me, that's fascinating because historically we knew Peter had a house and the early church met in his house. And in church history, we read about that house.

A Visitor to Peter's House is 381 AD

As a matter of fact, a traveler in 381 AD, a it's about 300 years after Jesus, almost 400 years was traveling through Palestine and stopped in Capernaum. And in her journal, she marked it down. And she said, I stopped at the house of the apostle Peter and the walls of his house are still ha standing, but they built a church over it.

And we know from church history, they built Octagon Byzantine church over it. And it stayed there until about 680 AD. When the, uh, Muslims came in and took over the area and destroyed Capernaum completely, including the house of Peter or at least the church that was on top, it was in the nineties.

They began to do some excavations and found that indeed there was a church there. They knew that, but underneath the church, somebody got deep enough to find that Peter's house is still there. What was amazing is Peter's house. Peter's house is still intact in the sense of, they built the house, the church over it, but they didn't want to touch anything inside. There was still pottery inside side. They still had graffiti on the walls, just like your bathroom, your house. Kind of like stencils on the walls.

Now actually it was the church that would do that. They would write on the wall and leave memos and things. And they had pictures of a fish and they actually found fish hooks inside Peter's house pottery. And I love this one.

They found the grinding wheel that was still in the courtyard. And that's probably the grinding wheel that Peter's mother in-law used. And Peter's mother used all their lives.

I think that's fascinating to find out that this is not just a story in the Bible. This is a real place that God preserved for us to know that Jesus did walk and talk on this or earth. And he touched people's lives. And every story we read is real. Also a difficult place to minister. Jesus spent most of his ministry there for the three, three and a half years.

And he traveled out from there, but he made his home in Capernaum. And at the end of his ministry, he, uh, said some nasty things about Capernaum because they were not obedient to him. Even though he did most of his miracles there, they rebelled against that and they did not repent.

So in Matthew chapter 11, this is what Jesus says about his hometown, woe to you, Korazin and woe to you best side. Those were two other towns. Korazin was north of the, of Capernaum. Bethany beyond Jordan was diagonally across the lake. Jesus said, *"If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom and Gomorrah they would've repented long ago in sack cloth and ashes. And you Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths. If the miracles that were performed and you had been performed and Sodom, it would've remained until the, this day. But I tell you, it will be more bearable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for you."*

Jesus had some harsh things to say about his own place of ministry. Pause there, just like we do with some of the Psalms. There's a little word that says Selah, means, pause here and think about it.

What would Jesus think about us and our community and our family of believers. I found over time that there are some people, no matter what

Jesus does, they cannot believe God for a miracle. They refuse to believe. And some people can't see good things happening. If it happens to them, they'll always find something negative to pick at poke at. And, and for there's always something to analyze and tear apart rather than giving glory to God. Jesus found that was the case in caper.

Jesus was rejected in Nazareth (Luke 4:14-30)

And they found the same thing was in Nazareth. His hometown, both places rejected him, both places. He tried to do mighty works. He did mighty works, but people rejected him. Listen, folks, God is trying to do some mighty thing in your life. And in my life, he's trying to do some mighty things in this church. You saw the witness of that this morning, just in this, this offering on the altar of cigarettes that have been binding somebody for so many years, God is doing miracles.

He's touching lives. He's bringing about healing. He is changing people. He is, oh, I wish you could hear all the stories, but you know, Jesus, can't always accomplish what he wants because we're stubborn in Nazareth. He said he could do only a few miracles because of the stubbornness of their unbelief. And I say, Lord, don't let that happen to us. Please. Don't let our church be like your hometown, but let us hunger and long for your touch. We see the place that was an important place.

The Power

We've seen the place now we want to look at the power of this story though, because Jesus made a difference in the life of somebody that really needed him. We have the situation that Jesus is coming from the synagogue. He's walking to Peter's house. And I imagine that perhaps Peter and the rest of them gathered around him. Maybe, maybe Peter put his arm around, said, Jesus, I just want to warn you. You're going to my house. But we got a sick lady in the house and she is sick. She's kind of grumpy when she's sick and you just have to be quiet when you walk in.

And I think it's wonderful that the disciples coming into Peter's house, Peter, perhaps for the first time inviting Jesus to come in to his whole household, enters into that door and says, Lord, come in and make a change in my family. Lord Jesus. I want you to come in here and take it over. I want you to change everything, make it all new. You know, God wants to do that. Jesus wants to enter every one of our lives and make

changes. He wants to restore you. He wants to heal you. He wants to change your life and make it more like Jesus.

I imagine that Peter's mother-in-law was a sweet little old lady, frail, feeble, maybe at life's end. But in this situation she needed a touch from the master. That's really what this power encounter is all about. Jesus was in all the miracles that Mark wrote about. The miracles were the gospel of Jesus proving and showing and demonstrating that he had all power over all problems in every situation

In the end of the Gospel of Matthew, Matthew sums it up with the Lord being raised up to heaven and leaving his disciples. And he leaves them with a commission. He says,

“All power. All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth.” Matthew 28:19-20

That's the sum total of what Jesus came to do. He said, I've got authority over everything. I want you to look at this healing for a moment. It is a powerful healing.

The first step in this healing was JESUS HEARD ABOUT HER.

The first thing we see is the disciple told Jesus about her. Of course, Jesus knew all things. He didn't need their commentary. But he want to see and hear their concern for her. He wanted to be needed, to be asked.

THEN HE SAW HER NEED

When Jesus came into the home, the first thing he do did is he saw the mother-in-law and I imagine she wasn't out in the front room. He made it his business to go search out the hurting person. And Luke says he stooped down means not just that he bowed down, but he probably went down on his knee and it says, he touched her hand. That is he put her hand in his hand and he probably hurt for a moment with her pain and her suffering.

THEN HE SPOKE TO HER

But then he did something that no one else did. He spoke to the fever, spoke to the fever. Now I can see the little kids looking at the dead and say, dad, why don't you do that? Said half about medicines that have given us

injections and hurting us more speak to the fever. You know, I, I remember twice in my life where I've done that, where our kids or somebody was really desperate ill with a fever and through reading this passage understood that you can speak to the fever.

THEN HE REBUKED THE FEVER

That is you have to address the issue that's before you and Jesus did. So he treated the fever as though it were a person, he said, you're an obstacle. You're in the way, get out right now. She wasn't demonized that wasn't a demon in her. It was a fever, but Jesus said, I have authority over all disease.

THEN HE TOOK HER BY THE HAND AND HELPED HER UP

Immediately, she got up and was completely whole, Jesus was demonstrated his power and his concern.

What is the Power? All power is given to me. "He rebuked the fever"

- Authority over Satan, sickness, Sabbath, sins
- Authority over weather, winds, waves, water, and all nature
- Authority over the fish, animals, trees, rocks, water into wine, etc.
- Authority over death and the grave, and hell
- All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

If we had the time to go through all of the miracles, we could see that he had all power over Satan. He just did that in the synagogue. He had power to, to speak the word and he rebuked Satan. Now he rebuked the disease and it flees. He had power over Satan, over sickness, over the Sabbath. He had power over sins because he walked in one home and the guy had a withed hand and didn't address that at all. He had power over nature, sea, wind, and power over fish in the sea, over matter, over trees, over water into wine.

He just said, your sins are forgiven you. And he said, so that you would know the son of man has power authority to forgive sins. He has power over wind and waves and water and wine. Oh, I'd like to wax eloquent on that. Think of those stories.

Jesus is on a ship with his, his disciples, really a boat, not a ship. And he's, he's sleeping in the, the bow of the boat. I on a pillow of all things and, and the scriptures record that he was on a pillow of all things asleep. And the disciple said, Lord, don't you care that we perish and Jesus stood up and he looked around, you know how you are when you first wake up, when

you woke up this morning to that storm, you looked around, uh, Jesus got up, you looked around, you probably had some drool coming down.

HE SAW – JESUS ALWAYS SEES YOUR NEED!

Uh, what's going on. And he looked around and he saw what was happening. Exactly what he did with Peter's mother-in-law he saw what was happening. And then he turned to the wind and he spoke to the wind and he rebuked it. He said, peace, be still. And then he looked at the waves and he spoke to the waves and he said, you stop it right now. And I love the Portuguese translation of that since there was a great Bonanza, there was a great calm, you can't stop a sea instantaneously, but Jesus can't yet authority over nature itself to speak to the obstacle in faith. Stop it.

Now my friends, all around this room, people are facing obstacles to their lives. They've got problems and diseases and hurts and people that aren't saved in their family and situations in their marriage that are just in turmoil and you don't know what to do about it. And Jesus says to you this morning, I have all authority in heaven and earth to speak the, to that situation.

All you have to do is bring it to me. Let me see it. Tell me about it. The disciples had to tell Jesus about it. They had to lay it all out. You know, we need to do that.

We need to lay things out before the Lord so they can see it. We need to make it plain as day. I went on my prayer encounter this week for 24 hours. And in that I made my list before the Lord. And it's a wonderful time just to, just to lay it before the Lord and spread out every problem, every situation and lay it before him and say, God, I can't do a thing about it, Lord. I can't heal my marriage. I'm not talking about me, Lord. I can't heal my finances. Lord I can't of my body. Lord, I can't make my children behave.

I can't make them come back to you. I can't save my husband. I can't chase. After my lost wife, I can't do any of these things. I laid them at your feet. I spread them out to you because you have all authority in heaven and in earth.

He has power over the wind, over the sea, over the waves, to water into wine. And it seems like a silly miracle. He's there at a wedding and they run outta wine. So what go down to the store and buy some more.

But Peter's mother comes to Jesus. She comes to the right person and she says, Jesus, they they're out of wine. They're relatives. And they're embarrassed. And Jesus says, what all of us will do is what do you want me to do? And he says that to the blind man begging for help. What do I have to do with you?

What's that got to do with me?

What does that have to do with me? And then Mary being a faithful mother, knowing her son winked at the, at the servants. And she said, whatever he tells you to do you do it, because he's going to do something. He had never done a miracle before, but she knew it because he, she knew he had all power, all authority to do so. And then Jesus, just fill those jars with water. And then he didn't do any magical formulas. He just said go and serve it. And it turned to wine. Wow, that is authority. That is power overall.

He had authority over the trees and over the rocks, over sea and over nature. Remember the tree that he, he, we call it cursed from the king, James. He, he told the tree go dry up. And it, it did in 24 hours.

Remember the animals, there was a fish that, uh, that was in the ocean and Peter comes to Jesus. He had gone to the tax guy and the tax guy said, you owe so much. And so does your master. And Peter comes to Jesus and I don't have it to pay. Let me get a heads up here. April 15th is coming

The tax man cometh! And it came to Peter and Peter said, I don't have it.

He had to go to Jesus. And he had to tell him the problem, laid it all out, Lord, I don't have it. I haven't been negligent. You've been with me. I just don't have this extra. What am I going to do? And Jesus said, you go to the, you go to the Sea of Galilee. You just go down to the shore here, throw your hook in. And you pull out the first fish that comes and then you reach in his mouth and you pull out the coin that's in there and you pay the tax for you and me.

You know what Peter did. He ran down to the shore, put the hook on there. He probably didn't t even put bait on it. He just threw it out. And this fish grabbed on. He pulled it in and he found a coin enough to pay the tax. Exactly what was needed to pay the tax for Jesus and him. Do you think that was accident? You know, Jesus had to think about it ahead of time. He knew ahead of time. He had a fish here, Jesus speaks to the fish and he

says, Hey you, I want you to suck up that coin that somebody dropped and I want you to hold it in your mouth until I tell you.

And then that day the, the hook comes into the water and it's Peter's hook. And the, and the Lord says to the fish, that's the time bite it. And the fish bites it gets pulled in and he opens the mouth and the fish goes, oh, finally pulls that out. And it's just enough

Folks. This miracle is not just about healing. A mother-in-law it's about every problem that we face. That's beyond solution.

Jeremiah 32:17. God leaves it for us forever to remember. And Jeremiah says,

“Ah, Lord, God, behold, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. There is nothing too hard for you.”

My friends, the authority and power of this day, demonstration of Jesus in the life of Peter's mother-in-law says, Lord, there is nothing too hard for you, my friend, whatever your situation in your life, whatever the obstacle, the Lord needs to speak to that obstacle.

But you need to speak to the Lord. First, my friend, we need to get serious about the seriousness of life. When you are down and out, you don't have a dime. And when you're sick and tired of being sick and tired and when your marriage is falling apart and you can't glue it back together anymore, it's time to cry out to somebody that could do something. And that's Jesus.

The disciples knew that Jesus could do what they brought him into the home. And Peter almost says, *Lord, take over, do whatever you can in.* And Jesus did it.

The Purpose

The third and last thing we see is the purpose. We've seen the place we've seen the power demonstrated, but there's a purpose behind what Jesus does. There's a purpose that problem had to be talked about to the Lord.

The disciples came to Jesus and said, they begged him. They implored him. "Please do something." They laid it out before him.

He came in and Jesus saw the problem. Not only did he hear about it, but he saw it. Know this, that when you call upon the Lord, the Lord hears and the Lord answers. For Daniel it took three weeks of seeking God over an issue. And he didn't hear a peep, but he kept on praying. The angel came and said, *the day you've began to pray. God heard. And he sent the answer. I was just delayed.*

It was delayed, my friend, whatever the need. You've have to tell the Lord about it. We're going to have a prayer retreat here next week and next and the weekend after it's a wonderful opportunity. Just get along with God and lay it all out. Tell him your trial. Tell him your family. Tell him his situation of those lost people in your family. That son, that daughter, that mother-in-law, that father, that mother, that doesn't know the Lord, those kids that have wandered off and they're not obeying Jesus bring it to Jesus.

If you want a miracle, you don't just stand around, waiting for lightning to strike. You go to the master. The one who has the power over the lightning, you go to him, who has this authority? The disciples did. So, and I love the way Jesus saw it. He bent down, he held her hand. He rebuked the fever and he healed her immediately.

God can do what nobody else can do, but you have to bring it to Jesus. The second thing about this, this, uh, purpose here is that Jesus just doesn't go around healing people for no reason. I mean, there were lots of sick people and he always spoke to them and he always had a relationship somehow with them and talked to them about the disease and the situation, my friends, God heals us for a purpose.

So I was with Peter's mother-in-law. God raised her up by the power of the Lord. Jesus Christ. She was raised up in a moment of, I love it. It says she was on the bed. She was dying. She was with this mega fever and Jesus spoke to her. He took her hand and he helped her up.

THEN IT SAYS SHE GOT UP AND SERVED THEM.

You know, the Lord wants you to stand on your own two feet. He wants to bring you up. Then he wants you to take it somewhere. The Lord gives you a healing. It's for a purpose.

God gives you long life. It's for a purpose. God gives you. Health is for a purpose. Peter's mother-in-law stands as a testimony for all time. For all three gospels recorded, she got up immediately and she served them. Most of us would've said, oh no, mother, you sit down. You're you're not, well, you haven't been well, you need to rest. She got up immediately and served them. She served Jesus until the day she died.

A number of years ago, I thought the council of a wise pastor, and I said, I don't know what to do with all the people that come to the altar, wanting to be healed and prayed for. And they think I'm going to heal them somehow. And

He said, you know, there are two questions I always ask and it helps to define what somebody's looking for. And these are the two questions. You know, the first question I ask is, is there anything that hinders the Lord from doing this miracle in your life? Is there anything that stops the Lord? Is there any sin in your life? That's going to hinder God from answering prayer as it was in Nazareth, the sin of unbelief hindered what God wanted to do. And then he said, once they dealt with that, the second question is this. If God, and when God heals you, what are you going to do with your healing? I remember so many blank. When I ask those questions, It's like, who are you to interrogate me? I just came for healing. I didn't want to be told I need to do something.

You know, but there are a few people that take that very seriously. I'll tell you about it, man. John Stewart, my church in Washington, PA John was 65 years old. He had retired, was doing well. He was prosperous. He had a great retirement, bought him off a new home down in Florida. They'd go down there and they'd winterize during the winter.

And you know, one day John got a bad report from his doctor and the doctor said, you have advanced prostate cancer. We can do some treatments, but I don't hold a lot of hope. And John had just seen one of his best friends die of that same illness. He came to church that day of broken man. And he came to the altar and asked for anointing and laying out at hands of elders in prayer for sake. And I remember those two questions my pastor had told me about. And I said, John, is there any reason why the

Lord should not heal you? Is there any sin in your life you need to take care of.

And John looked at me and he started to cry and he saw it. He just shook his shoulders. She said, oh, I failed so much. And he started to confess his sin to the Lord. And when he was done with that, I said, okay, the second question is this John, if and when the Lord heals you, what are you going to do with your healing? Well, that time he got off the altar and he sat on the pew and he said, I have to think about that. And he thought for a while, and he says, pastor, this is what I think. If the Lord heals me, I'm going to sell my house in Florida. I'm going to give it all to the Lord. I'm going to take that money. And I'm going to go overseas on mission trips over and over again, till the day I die.

Several weeks past John went through the therapies and the, all the things that they do. And certainly wasn't enough time to, to be cured. But he came in one Sunday morning. I'll never forget. John coming down the aisle with a paper in his hand,

He said Pastor, I've been healed. It's clear of bill of health. Doctor says I have no cancer at all. I've been healed.

Then John looked at me. I didn't have to ask the question again. John said, I remember the question. What am I going to do with my healing? John said, "I'm a man of my word. I made covenant with God. If he heals me, I'm giving my life to him for the rest of my days." He went down and sold the house in Florida, took the money to go on mission trips. Every year, several times during the year, he went overseas to serve the Lord.

He went to Mali, Africa several times and then landed in Cambodia, loved it. Went umpteen times. There helped to build three churches. The building of three churches in Cambodia became a beloved grandfather image to the Cambodian people. And then a few years ago, God called him home through another disease. But John could peacefully go and said, I've done what God called me to do. He gave me life. He extended my life that I might serve him.

My friend, what are you going to do? We've got answer to prayer in your life. What are you going to do with God's healing, touch in your body? How are you going to serve him? Or are you going to serve yourself? I close with a few questions, whatever your obstacle, whatever your difficulty, whatever the problem you're facing. Jesus has authority over it. Have you told him about it? Not just quickly and haphazardly, have you taken some

time to just pour out your heart for God before God had you prayed it through?

If you've surrendered your life to the Lord, have you surrendered your household as Peter to it? Have you asked God to touch everything in your house? Every life, every person and everything that you own. Peter did that. And he surrendered us to the Lord. I like to call it.

The fingerprints of Jesus was on everything in Peter's house. And I really wish we'd get some forensic people to go into Peter's house today and dust for the fingerprints of our savior. And you may not find it physically, but you'll find it in every life that came into that home, they were touched by Jesus and never the same.

What do you want God to do in your life?

Has Jesus touched you, have you held his hand? In a moment was are going to listen to a song, THERE WAS JESUS. It's a contemporary song, not a tear jerker, but it's a song that talks about surrender and surrender of your life. And I want you to consider your life and your, your household and your problem that need to be surrendered to the Lord.

Do you have a problem? Do you have a situation? Do you have a physical need. You've got a crisis. Bring it to Jesus!

That needs Jesus touch. Now I'm going to ask you to respond and a physical. I'm going to ask you to stand right where you are and say, here am I Lord, I've got a problem. I got a situation.

I got a sickness, a heartache, a family problem, a job problem, a financial problem, an emotional problem, or something else that I can't solve.

+Would you just stand up and say, Lord here, am I right where I am? I can't solve it. I can't push them out way. I can't make it happen, but I give it to you. I ask you to take it. The Lord can change this situation in my life. Where'd you give that to Jesus right now, all over the congregation. Just remain there for a moment as I pray for you,

Heavenly Father, you see, and you know, Lord Jesus. We invite you right now to come in and see, See the Peter's. Mother-in-law laid out.

Hear the heart cry. Oh Lord, we don't know what to do. Jesus. We can't change that situation. It won't go away. But it's an obstacle. Lord. We ask you to speak to that mountain And remove it with your authority. Oh Jesus.

I asked that you would do that in these lives. Lord, put your fingerprint all over them. Let the rest of the world know they've been touched by God that you have done this for your glory and for your purpose. Then take these lives and those answers and use them for your glory. I ask in

Jesus name. Amen.