



“Priority #1 – The Word- Take a step back” – Mark 1:35-39

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Dear friends in Christ,

Aren't you tired of the noise? Like a rowdy crowd of fans cheering and booing and going on. It's the noise of all the stuff going on in life? I know you are bombarded everyday with many messages, many people, and many things to think about. You may get notifications all over the place. I mean social media, emails, text messages, and good old-fashioned telemarketing phone calls. All together it turns into noise, a chaos of information, and a racing mind full of everything under the sun.

Maybe more than anything it moves us to worry, anxiety, and stress paralysis. There is so much going on that we can't move. We can't move forward. And now what do we do from here?

Jesus, even Jesus, took a step back from everything. He went to his Father in heaven in prayer. He took a moment. Even a moment that was cut short by the demands of Peter and the disciples, and the people. He took a step back to reassess, realign, and rethink his priorities.



Jesus had so much going on. His healings were attracting more and more people. Galilee was swarming with people that caught word of this amazing man. Jesus was becoming big. He was a superstar. He was well liked because he cared about people. And caring about people is exhausting. Where does it end?

Even Jesus, the Son of God, took a step back to see where his priorities lie. He essentially had to sneak out at night when it was dark just to get away from it all. Why was he here? What was the purpose of his ministry? Where was he headed?

Jesus answers the question. Mark 1:37-38

³⁷they found him and said to him, “Everyone is looking for you.” ³⁸And he said to them, “Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out.”

He was there to preach. He was there to preach the Word. He was now moving on to broaden his mission with his first priority to preach the Word. The healings were necessary as Jesus was to fulfill the prophecy as the Messiah. But at some point it takes you away from the real purpose. Jesus wasn't here to be famous. That was a side effect of being awesome. He was a superstar, but that wasn't the point.



Healings for Jesus is like helping for us. We help others, we care for others, and we make a difference in this world. But with no message behind it, where does it take us? With everything that goes on this world, we risk being just another noise. Without a message, without a Word, we are no different from government services. Without a Word, or a message, we become no different than good customer service. Without a Word, or a message, we become no different than a person just doing their job for the money or self-promotion.

Jesus says in three Gospels, "For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me." Matthew 26:11-Mark 14:7-John 12:8 Instead of taking Jesus out of the equation, why don't we do both, and have Jesus with us when we do give to the poor and help others? The message must accompany the movement. Otherwise it's just noise.

The concept can easily be described in the Word to the Corinthians. "If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ²And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing." 1 Corinthians 13



A noisy gong and a clanging symbol are all of our works apart from Jesus. God is that love. He is that love that came down from heaven, and died for you and me. This is the message in a nutshell. Jesus gave up his life for a reason. He loved us and forgave us so that we could have eternal life.

Jesus was a superstar. If you watch the super bowl today, one of the players, any of the players, could become a superstar. With an amazing touchdown he could save the game. With an amazing tackle he could save the game. Maybe even an amazing block or a sacking of the quarterback could save the game. The list goes on of that one amazing play that could save the game, and from that time on, they would go down in history for being a superstar.

Jesus was that superstar, God and Man who won the game for us. Except it wasn't just a game. The most unexpected save that Jesus successfully completed was his suffering, death, and resurrection. Think of how meaningless his life would really have been if he didn't die for the sins of the world. He would have been like anybody else. Just a good guy who liked to help people.

But for us to be superstars we don't have to complete salvation like Jesus. We can be that superstar by telling others that same message Jesus came to deliver. We have that same Word that Jesus came to preach.



You don't have to be a preacher like a pastor. You can share one phrase to accomplish your purpose. Years ago, my youth group went out and raked some leaves as a service project. Normally I would have gone along because at my last parish I was Pastor slash Youth Leader in a small church. But not this time. Other parents and church members went along. The youth were effective in raking leaves. And then it all boiled down to one question by the home owner. Why are you doing this? The wise parent said. "We are doing this because Jesus loves us, and we want to share that love with you." He didn't say, "Well the church was doing a project so we decided to be a part of it." Or He didn't say, "We just want to make a difference." And he didn't say something like. "It's just the right thing to do."

The Word was spoken. That is priority one, The word. Maybe even just one word. "Jesus." Amen