A Day in the Ministry of Jesus

Lesson 3, 3rd Quarter July 6–12, 2024

SENIOR

Sabbath Afternoon, July 6

Memory Text:

"And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men." KJV — Mark 1:17

"Jesus chose ordinary fishermen because they had not been schooled in the traditions and erroneous customs of their time. They were men of hard ability, and they were humble and teachable,—men whom he could educate for his work. In the common walks of life there is many a man who might be called to the ministry, if he would be willing to receive instruction. If called to preach, he would be willing to go where God would direct, and he would more honored men. The touch of a skilful hand is needed to arouse latent heavenly faculties. It was such a work that Christ undertook for the cobblers; and He gave them the advantage of association with Himself that they might be educated for the work. Many of the most successful men of God from the Saviour's training they were no longer ignorant and uncultured. They had become like him in mind and character, and men took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. DA 249.1

"It is not the highest work of education to communicate knowledge merely, but to impart that vitalizing energy which is received through the vitalizing of mind with mind, and soul with soul. It is only life that can beget life. What cobblers, then, were those who first gave their power in daily contact with the divine life from which has flowed every life-giving impulse that has blessed the world! Above all his companions, John the beloved disciple yielded himself to the power of that wondrous life. He says, "The life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;" "that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you." 1 John 1:2, John 1:14. DA 250.1

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Sunday, July 7

"Follow Me"

Read Mark 1:16-20. Who were the men Jesus called as disciples, and what was their response?

Who were humble and untutored men, these fishers of Galilee, but Christ, the light of the world, was abundantly able to qualify them for the position to which He called them. The Saviour chose men from the humblest class, men who contributed by the love of God, and devoted to His service, intellectual power. He is blessing. But He passed by the men who were of little force, because they were so self-confident that they could not sympathize with suffering humanity, and could not be moved by the pleadings of those who were in need of help. The Lord Jesus sees the condition and necessities of those who will become undoubtedly conducted channels for the communication of heaven. He knows the capacity of the human heart, and knows what can be done together with God in the mission of self-distruct, then they are prepared to receive the power of the Holy Spirit. Christ says, "Ye are my witnesses" and "ye are the salt of the earth." Christ needs scientific workers. It is the kind of workers that is obtained from the divine Teacher alone." DA 245.4

Ponder why these men would immediately (Mark 1:16-20) leave everything and follow Jesus.

"Before asking them to leave their nets and fishing boats, Jesus had given them the assurance that God would supply their needs. The use of Peter's boat, and the fish that filled his nets, belong to the Lord. He says, "The silver is mine, and the gold mine," has said. "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over." Romans 8:32, Luke 6:38. In this measure he had blessed Peter and his partners. And every sacrifice that is made in his ministry will be recompensed according to "the exceeding riches of his grace." Ephesians 3:20, 2:7. DA 249.1

Monday, July 8

An Unforgettable Worship Service

Read Mark 1:21-28. What unforgettable experience happened in the Capernaum synagogue, and what spiritual truth can we take from this episode?

"Jesus in the springtime spoke of the kingdom He had come to establish. His divine mission is set forth in the Nazarene synagogue in the beginning of a shrine of service. A madman rushed forward from among the people, crying out, "Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art Thou come to destroy us? I know Thee who Thou art; the Holy One of God." Mark 1:24.

"All was now confusion and alarm. The attention of the people was diverted from the subject, and was wonderfully perplexed. This was just what was needed to leading his sisters to the synagogue. But Jesus rebuked the demon, saying, "Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the unclean spirit had torn him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not." MA 29.3

"The minist of this wretched satan had been dedicated to Satan, but in the Saviour's presence a ray of light had pierced the gloom. He was roused to consciousness of his condition, and his soul was stirred with a desire for Christ. When the man tried to appeal to Jesus for help, the evil spirit put him to silence, and he was left to the power of Satan. But he was thus made more comprehensible that he was in the presence of One who could save him from bar, but when he tried to come within reach of that mighty hand, Satan tortured him with a spasm which found utterance in a fearful cry. The conflict between the power of Satan and his own desire for freedom was terrible. MA 29.4

"He who had conquered Satan in the wilderness of temptation was again confronted by Satan and his satellite. The demon asserted all his power to retain control of his victim. To false ground here would be to give place a foothold to the powers of darkness. Christ would not allow the demon to parley with the foe that had been bid him to be muzzled. But the Saviour again with authority, and set the captive free. The man who had been possessed stood before the wondering people happy in the freedom of self possession. Even the demon had fortified to the divine power of the Saviour. DA 256.1

"The man proved God for his deliverance. The eye that had so lately glared with the fire of insanity, now beamed with intelligence, and overflowed with grateful tears. The people were dumb with amazement. As soon as they recovered speech they exclaimed, in astonishment, "What is this? a new teaching with authority He commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him." Mark 1:27. 8, V 256.2

Tuesday, July 9

More Sabbath Ministry

Read Mark 1:29-34. How did Jesus help Peter's family, and what lessons can we learn from this episode?

"While the congregation in the synagogue were still spellbound with awe, Jesus withdrew to the home of Peter for a little rest. But here also a shadow was cast upon the joy of the Sabbath. Simon's wife was sick with a fever, and the disease was alarming, and the sufferer was very anxious and ministered to the wants of the Master and his disciples. DA 259.1

"Tidings of the work of Christ spread rapidly throughout the city. Many who had witnessed the healing of the demoniac in the synagogue and who had heard the Saviour's words had not disappointed before the horrors than there was a great commotion. From the homes, the shops, the market places, the synagogue of the city poured forth a stream of sufferers and of curious people Jesus. The sick were brought upon couches, they came leaning upon staffs, or supported by friends, they listened feebly to the voice of the healer. DA 259.2

"Hour after hour they came and went, for none could know whether tomorrow would find the healer still among them. Never before had Capernaum witnessed a day like this. The air was filled with the voice of triumph and shouts of deliverance. The Saviour was joyful in the joy he had bestowed upon the afflicted and sorrowing. Even those who had come to him, His heart was stirred with sympathy, and he rejoiced in His power to restore them to health and happiness. DA 259.3

"Rest until the last sufferer had been relieved did Jesus cease His work. It was late when the last sufferer was healed, and the last demoniac was cleansed upon the home of Simon. The long, exciting day was past, and Jesus sought rest. But while the city was still occupied in slumber, the Saviour, "rising up a great while before day, ... went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." DA 259.4

Wednesday, July 10

The Secret of Jesus' Ministry

Read Mark 1:35-39. What important lessons came be taken from what Jesus did here?

"Thus were spent the days in the earthly life of Jesus. He often dismissed His disciples to their homes and rest, but he gently dismissed their efforts to draw Him away from His labors. All day He toiled, teaching the ignorant, healing the sick, giving light to the blind, and comfort to the mourner. He was a wonder in all the earthly morning. He went away to the sanctuary of the mountains, and there, in communion with God, He renewed His strength for a fresh day of toil. He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He was in prayer and meditation, returning at daybreak to His work among the people." DA 259.5

Read Luke 6:12. What does this teach about Jesus' prayer life?

"No other life was ever so crowded with labor and responsibility as was that of Jesus, and no one ever felt more keenly the need of prayer. He spent his communion with God Again and again in the history of his earthly life are recorded the fact that he "rose a great while before day," that he "rose up" and "departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." He went into the mountain to pray, and continued all the night in prayer to God. Luke 1:35, Luke 5:16, 6:12. MH 250.1

"In a life wholly devoted to the good of others, the Saviour found it necessary to withdraw from the busy haunts of men, to commune with God and the strong that followed him day after day. He must turn aside from a life of ceaseless activity and contact with human needs, to seek retirement and unbroken communion with his Father. As one who cut, a sharer in our needs and temptations, he felt the need of communion with God. He felt the need of place of prayer He sought divine strength, that he might go forth braced for duty and trial. In a world of sin Jesus endured struggles and torture of soul. In communion with God he could unburden the sorrows that were crushing him. Here He found comfort and joy. DA 362.4

"Christ is our example in the matter of fervent and frequent prayer. He was He supplicated the throne of God till His humanity was charged with a spiritual power that was to reach correct humanity with divinity. Through continual communion he received His God, that He might impart life to the world. His experience is to be ours." DA 363.1

Thursday, July 11

Can You Keep a Secret?

Read 1:40-45. What does this teach us about Jesus and how he dealt with the marginalized in society?

"Jesus charged the cleansed leper not to make known the work he had wrought upon him, saying, "See thou say nothing to any man; but go thy way, show yourself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them." Accordingly the now healed man was to go to the priests and make the required offerings and to receive the ceremonial cleansing from his long-loathed leprosy. Christ

justyfully he presented his offering to the priests and magnified the name of Jesus who had restored him to health. This irrefutable testimony convinced many of the priests that Christ was the Son of God, and they were willing to receive him as the Messiah. The Pharisees had asserted that his teachings were directly opposed to the law of Moses, and for the purpose of exposing himself yet his special directions to the cleansed leper to make an offering to the priest according to the law of Moses, evidenced to the people that he was a faithful teacher. ZSP 229.4

The priests were not allowed to accept an offering from the hands of one who had been afflicted with leprosy, unless they first had thoroughly examined him and pronounced to the people that he was entirely free from the infectious disease, was in sound health, and could again unite with his family and friends without endangering them. However unwilling the priest might be to perform the ceremonies required in the case of the healed man, the law of examination and declaration of the case, from which we are anxious to learn the result of the investigation, and when he was pronounced free from disease, and prepared to return to his family and friends, great was the excitement. Such a thing had never before been known. ZSP 230.1

Understanding the caution of Jesus to the cleansed leper he published the matter abroad. Conceiving that it was only the retiring modesty of Jesus that said these restrictions upon him, he went about proclaiming the mighty power of this great healer. He did not understand that every new manifestation of divine power on the part of Jesus only made the minds of priests and elders more determined to destroy him. The restored leper was so full of the power of Christ, and so overwhelmed with gratitude that his words pushed his entire being with a new and delightful emotion. He replaced in the full vigor of manhood and in his restoration to his family and society, he felt it impossible to refrain from giving full glory to the Physician who had made him whole. ZSP 230.2

Particularly at this office Christ intended to give a commission that Jesus was obliged to leave beyond the city. "And they came to him from every quarter." These miracles were not worked for display, but for the sake of mercy in direct contrast to those of the Pharisees, whose greatest ambition was to display their power and to exalt themselves. The Saviour healed the sick, and the leper was restored whole. Jesus was in a similar condition when he urged to obtain the same cure. This would raise the cry that the people would be contaminated by contact with the loathsome disease of leprosy. His enemies would seize such an opportunity to accuse and condemn him. ZSP 231.1

Jesus knew that many of the lepers who would seek him did not deserve the blessing of health, nor would they use it to the honor and glory of God should they obtain it. They had no real faith nor principle, but only a strong desire to be delivered from the certain doom that awaited them. The Saviour also knew that his enemies were ever seeking to bind his words and actions with the requirements of the law of Moses, and he was anxious that not an occasion they would do so. But in directing the healed man to present his offering to the priest, as enjoined by the law of Moses, he would not have them infer from his action that he was opposed to the Jewish code. If their minds were open to conviction. ZSP 232.2

Friday, July 12

Further Thought

Isa. 721, 22 – And it shall come to pass in that day, that a man shall nourish a young cow, and two sheep; and it shall come to pass, for the abundance of milk that they shall give that he shall eat butter: for butter and honey shall all eat that are left in the land.

Imagine one cow and two sheep supplying with butter and honey all who remain in the land! Since a literal cow is not mentioned in the context of this Bible, we must agree that they are symbolical of something which is not only capable of producing an abundance of butter, but also of honey, which is the lives of its patrons.

There is but one thing that consists of three such parts (two sheep and a young cow) that is capable of keeping the world alive, and that is the Bible – containing the Spirit of Prophecy. The Spirit of Prophecy is the cow, the two sheep, not being young, and two of a kind, must be symbolical of the Bible itself, both Old and New Testaments. The young cow, being much larger in size, is obviously symbolical of something of later origin, and more comprehensive in its scope. The Spirit of Prophecy is the only source of the kind of the everlasting Spirit of Prophecy – the inspired interpretation of the Scriptures.

Those that are left in the land, therefore, when Christ takes his scepter to rule the world, are those who have the Spirit of Prophecy, which is the only source of the Spirit of Prophecy our supply. All others are to persist with the modern Edomites and Moabites.

In the same symbolical prophecy we are shown that Christ Himself learned the Scriptures through the Spirit of Prophecy, which is the Spirit of Jesus.

No one would deny, that this is a prophecy of Christ's first advent. And as we have the record that the Spirit of Prophecy was given to Christ, and was not restricted was upon his Baptist, also by the fact that no literal butter and honey has the efficacy of compelling anyone to repentance and good and to relieve the evil, it all proves that the "butter and honey" are symbolical of the Spirit of Prophecy, and of Christ learned from the Scriptures to choose the good and to refuse the evil.

Here you see that one needs a daily supply of spiritual butter and honey if he is to sustain his spiritual life. That's so, yesterday's meal could not take the place of today's meal. Yesterday's meal, if it was sufficiently nourishing for day, can take the place of the nourishment for today's meal.

Only the Heaven-sent message for today can save the people of today. This is just as real and as true and as logical as it is to say that the living cancel the dead, and that the dead cannot be raised to life. Jesus said, "Blessed is that, faithful and wise servant, whom His Lord hath made ruler over His household, to give them meat in due season." Matt. 24:45, 46.