

**Mark 1:29-39 (Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany—Series B)****“Breaking In”****Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer, Enfield, CT****February 7, 2021**

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Our text is the Gospel lesson recorded in Mark 1:

<sup>29</sup>And immediately, upon coming out of their synagogue, he went into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. <sup>30</sup>And Simon’s mother-in-law was lying down, burning up with fever, and immediately they spoke to him concerning her. <sup>31</sup>And he came to her and raised her by grasping her hand. And the fever left her, and she began to serve them. <sup>32</sup>And after evening had fallen, when the sun had set, they proceeded to bring to him all those in a bad condition and those who were demon-possessed. <sup>33</sup>And the whole city was gathered together before the door. <sup>34</sup>And he healed many in bad condition because of various diseases and he threw out many demons, and he would not permit the demons to speak because they knew him. <sup>35</sup>And early in the middle of the night he arose and went out and went away into a desert place and there he proceeded to pray. <sup>36</sup>And Simon and those with him hunted him down, <sup>37</sup>and they found him and said to him, “Everyone is seeking you.” <sup>38</sup>And he said to them, “Let us go elsewhere into the neighboring market-towns in order that there also I may proclaim. For this purpose I have come out.” <sup>39</sup>And he went proclaiming in their synagogues—into the whole of Galilee—and throwing out demons.

Fever; sickness; pestilence. Cancer; mental illness; genetic disorders. Deformity; blindness; paralysis. Demonic possession.

This is the evidence that the whole world is corrupted. Romans 8:21—the whole creation is in bondage, trapped in the endless cycle of deterioration leading to death. People as well as the creation have been enduring this since Genesis 3 and the Fall into sin which delivered not only the creation but also all people into the slavery and captivity of the devil. Our fallen human nature, which we confess to be sinful and unclean, is subjected not only to death and other bodily ills, but also to the reign of the devil. “Death and other bodily ills, together with the tyranny of the devil, are penalties in the proper sense. For human nature is enslaved and held captive by the devil, who deceives it with ungodly opinions and errors and incites it to all sorts of sins. . . . World history itself shows how great is the strength of the devil’s rule. Blasphemy [against God] and wicked teachings fill the world, and in these bonds

the devil holds enthralled those who are wise and righteous in the eyes of the world”

(Apology II.46-49).

I guess I don't need to tell you that the world is a mess. Human nature (your nature and mine, too) is totally corrupted and always and only inclined toward sin and every kind of evil. Our bodies are subject to disease and disability. The whole creation groans under the weight of its decay. On a personal level, we lie and cheat; we gossip, covet, and curse. We lust with unhealthy desire; we steal and degrade. We hate and despise; we commit sexual immorality and adultery. Every one of God's commandments lie shattered and broken at our feet, destroyed by the actions of our hands, hearts, and minds.

Under whose reign, then, are you according to your sinful nature, according to the corruption and decay of this world? Isn't hard to tell, is it? You and I are under Satan's rule, bound to him because of the corruption of sin. Paul refers to it as “the domain of darkness” (Col. 1:13). So what does all this have to do with today's Gospel lesson?

In Mark 1, we see people trapped under the reign of the devil. They are subjected to fever (Peter's mother-in-law), to diseases and demon-possession. Satan had been flexing his evil muscles, flaunting his rule over God's creation. But something is wrong in that ancient snake's domination of people and creation. Those in bad conditions because of various diseases are being healed and made whole! Demons—fallen, evil angels—are being thrown out of people! Satan's reign is beginning to become undone! He's losing control! The reign and rule of God is breaking into the devil's domain of darkness.

Jesus of Nazareth, the incarnate Son of God, has burst on the scene. Jesus, who is true God and true Man, brought to His fallen creation and people the reign and rule of God in order to deliver us and all creation from Satan's power. “God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, our

Lord, into the world to redeem and deliver us from the devil's power. He sent Him to bring us to Himself and to govern us as a King of righteousness, life, and salvation against sin, death, and an evil conscience" (LC III.51).<sup>1</sup> Jesus' miracles of healing and casting out demons are indicators of the coming of the reign and rule of God. They show who Jesus is—true God who has come to visit His people—and they actually implement that gracious reign and rule! The Holy Spirit-filled reign and rule of God that has arrived in Jesus and His warfare against Satan's realm is seen in our text in work that Jesus does on behalf of those held in the power of sin and Satan.

Jesus' healing miracles are Gospel, Good News, because they reveal to us the in-breaking of God's rule. But they are more. Jesus' miracles point forward to the ultimate miracle of Jesus' saving death and resurrection. They are previews of the coming attraction: the cross and the empty tomb, that wins for us and all creation redemption from sin, Satan, and death in the forgiveness of sins. Jesus' healing ministry and His throwing out the demons are tidbits of an even greater goodness to come. And we find that at the cross and the empty tomb!

In Jesus' sacrificial death, with the shedding of His holy, precious blood, with His resurrection victory over death, He has redeemed us and all creation from sin, from the devil, from death, and from all evil. We who were once captive under the devil's power, have been set free. Jesus delivered us lost and condemned creatures. He redeemed, bought us back, from all sins, from death, and from the rule of the devil. He has taken us as His own property under His shelter and protection so that He may govern us by His righteousness, wisdom,

---

<sup>1</sup> Paul Timothy McCain, ed., *Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2005), 414.

power, life, and blessedness. As the apostle has written, “[God] has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins” (Col. 1:13–14 ESV).

Jesus has brought us from Satan to God, from death to life, and from sin to righteousness.<sup>2</sup> He has brought us into the reign and rule of God by giving us the forgiveness of all our sins. Our lies and cheating, our gossip, covetousness, and cursing, our lust, hatred, and immorality are all covered in the blood of Christ. His righteousness has been put on us in our Baptism. By His wounds we are healed. Jesus has saved us and made us members of His kingdom, people under the gracious reign and rule of God our heavenly Father. Our Lord Christ has brought to us already the blessings of the age to come when God Himself would be present with us in the person and work of His Son through the preaching and teaching of His Gospel and when the Spirit would be poured out upon us as He has been in Holy Baptism. In the Sacrament of the Altar, we receive the Lord Jesus whose real presence in the Sacrament delivers to us forgiveness, life, and salvation—signs of the reign and rule of God in Christ for us. It is truly a participation ahead of time in the feast to come when we are forever with God in a new creation under His rule and reign.

By His Incarnation, Jesus the Son of God came into this world to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8). He brought the reign and rule of God crashing into history, breaking-in to Satan’s kingdom, and undoing it. The Lord Jesus proclaimed the Gospel of forgiveness. He healed and brought release to those who were captive in the bondage of sin and its consequences. Our Lord Jesus suffered death itself as He died in humanity’s place to win our

---

<sup>2</sup> Paul Timothy McCain, ed., *Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2005), 401–402.

forgiveness and new life. He rose again the Victor over death and the grave. As the Baptized people of God in Christ, you are no longer under the power of sin and death. You are no longer under the devil's reign and rule. You are children of the King! You belong to Christ. You live under God's gracious reign and rule now and into the age to come in the new heaven and new earth. Amen.