



WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

“TIME OUT!”

John Galbreath
Bible Study Series

Text: Mark 1:29-39
Date: February 4, 1979

About Westminster's Galbreath Bible Study Series:

This lesson is one taken from a sermon preached by John Galbreath at Westminster Presbyterian Church on February 4, 1979.

To complete the lesson, we suggest that you begin by reading the designated Bible passage (Mark 1:29-39).

Next, review the outline of the sermon. Reflect on the chosen scripture and how you would “fill in” the remainder of the message from the chosen passage.

Then, review the study questions posed about the lesson — whether by yourself or in your small group.

Finally, share your thoughts on the Galbreath Bible Study blog on the Westminster Intranet.

Readers should note that February 4 was a Communion Sunday.

I. Introduction

A. What does one preach for his last sermon?

1. I found I had not saved anything special -- no parting shot or final admonition.

B. A woman as a teenager had been given a drive through town by one of its leading citizens. At the close of the drive, [the citizen] went into the courthouse, had a heart attack and died.

1. The townspeople kept pressing her for what he had been saying -- and he had said nothing of any particular significance.
2. There is a mystique about "last words."
3. Books of sermon illustrations are replete with various people's "last words" -- most of which are highly suspect.

C. If I couldn't preach the gospel in 32 years, I won't do it in my last twenty minutes.

D. So we return to the lectionary, with the text and theme we announced last August.

E. Context

1. Earlier portion -- Jesus baptized by John; Jesus calls Peter, Andrew, John, James to leave their fishing business. Jesus preaches in the synagogue in Capernaum.

II. Going Home to Sunday Dinner

A. Capernaum was home of the fishermen.

1. Specifically, he went to the home of Peter.
2. Peter's wife.

a) Those favoring the marriage of Catholic clergy must take consolation [in] this passage that indicates the first pope was married.

b) What was her reaction, when caring for a sick mother, she found four guests for Sunday dinner?

c) Jesus must have been sensitive enough to realize the awkwardness of the situation.

(1) But the real issue was not the issue of hospitality, but of the life of the mother-in-law.

3. Jesus takes her by the hand, and she is healed.

a) I suggest no explanation as to how -- there is much we have to learn, and I accept it on face value.

b) Healing was always one-on-one. No mass healing.

B. Sundown

1. Word had gone out, and as soon as the Sabbath was over, and people were free to travel, carry others, the sick began to come in.

2. By torchlight, the entire town seemed to be gathered at the door!

a) What finally broke it up? We don't know, but it must have been late.

III. A Lonely Place

A. Before sun up, he had gone out in the countryside to pray.

1. In Mark's narrative, the preceding day had marked his first public preaching, his first healing -- emotionally and physically exhausting.

a) Jesus recognized his own need.

2. Rose Macauley, a novelist, said, "All I require is a room of my own."

a) Jesus had no room of his own -- so found his privacy in darkness.

B. "Take care."

1. What are your "ritual" parting words?

a) I find this is what I usually say, in leaving a hospital room.

b) A foolish thing, for what options has the patient?

c) It is a euphemism that is one way to say, "I care about you."

2. Paul to Timothy, "Neglect not the gifts that were given you."
 - a) *Our spirits need to be tended -- will not tend themselves.*
 - b) *Discipleship requires discipline.*
 - (1) I hated to get up for our Monday AM prayer group -- I am not a morning person.
3. Certainly if Jesus needed this discipline, so much more do we.
 - a) *Our presence here for the sacrament is a witness to our own hunger and thirst -- our need to feed at His table.*

IV. "On to the Next Town"

- A. Peter interrupted Jesus, "Everyone is searching for you."
 1. Jesus could have settled down right there, and have spent a career healing.
 - a) *But there were other things he was called to do.*
- B. "Let us go on to the next towns"
 1. This is a very different town than that to which I came in 1946.
- C. The next town was no better or worse than Capernaum -- just different.
 1. As I move on to the next town, I do not see it as a promotion, but just a new direction.
- D. Stay open to the happy surprises of God's call to you.

Every life can be adventuresome if we but keep alert to the new directions in which His Holy Spirit wants to lead us.

Study Questions -- Part I

Bible Reading: Mark 1:29-39

Mark 1: 29 through 31 says: ²⁹ And straightway, when they were come out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ³⁰ Now Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever; and straightway they tell him of her: ³¹ and he came and took her by the hand, and raised her up; and the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.

- If you had witnessed this healing, what would you have done?

Mark 1: 32 through 34 says: ³² And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were sick, and them that were possessed with demons. ³³ And all the city was gathered together at the door. ³⁴ And he healed many that were sick with divers diseases, and cast out many demons; and he suffered not the demons to speak, because they knew him.

- Try to imagine what you would have thought if you had lived near Simon and Andrew. What would you have thought of this Jesus?

Mark 1: 35 through 37 says: ³⁵ And in the morning, a great while before day, he rose up and went out, and departed into a desert place, and there prayed. ³⁶ And Simon and they that were with him followed after him; ³⁷ and they found him, and say unto him, All are seeking thee.

- Why do you think Jesus needed to go off by himself? What toll do you think healing took on him?

Mark 1: 38 and 39 say: ³⁸ And he saith unto them, Let us go elsewhere into the next towns, that I may preach there also; for to this end came I forth. ³⁹ And he went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out demons.

- What would Jesus have risked if he had stayed in one place and let others come to him as they did on the night in Simon and Andrew's house?

Study Questions -- Part II

Sermon :

There is a handwritten note in the envelope: The only constant in the universe is change. -- Heraclitus

I.A. If you knew that you had an opportunity to speak to the people who are important to you one last time, what would you say to them about your faith and your relationship with God?

II.A. What impact does it have on your vision of Jesus to know that he did such a human thing as going to a friend's home for dinner?

II.B. Think about the times in which this happened. If you had heard about a healing, would you have gone to seek out the healer? What would you have asked for?

III. Jesus recognized his own need to get away to renew his strength. Why do you think so few of us make the same commitment to quiet time with our own thoughts?

III.A.1.a. -- There is the handwritten word "overcommitted."

III.B. What do you say when you are taking your leave from someone? Having considered this sermon do you think you might change your words of parting?

III.B.2. What gifts has God given you and how do you make sure you don't neglect them?

III.B.2.b. What discipline do you apply to your discipleship? What else can you commit to doing to deepen it?

IV. Jesus traveled to share his message. What more can you be doing to help continue that work?