

Knowing Our Purpose in Life

The gospel for this coming Sunday (Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany) is Mark 1:29-39. This reading sites Jesus' activity once he left the synagogue. To show urgency of Jesus' ministry we see the word "immediately" to describe Jesus' departing from the synagogue.

His first actions are to cast out demons and heal people. There were a plethora of both. It must have been pretty heady stuff. The disciples certainly got caught up in it and wanted to define Jesus' ministry by continuing to do these miraculous feats.

Jesus often took time to pray after very taxing events. That is what he does in this instance as well. Here he was in touch with his Father. This was a good touchstone where the direction Jesus' ministry was concerned.

A dear friend once told me, "just because you can do something does not mean that you should." Jesus' unswerving adherence to the right priorities stands in sharp contrast with our own tendency to lose focus, allow others to set our agenda, and put lesser things above what is most important.

In verse 38, Jesus in speaking to Peter's request to continue doing miracles where they were, states: "*let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for it is why I came out.*" That was his purpose.

The word "preach" means can mean "to cry out loud, declare, announce, or preach." It involves the declaration of an event. It stresses dynamic proclamation. Here proclaiming God's Word is Jesus' stated mission.

The Lord has blessed each of us with gifts and talents. To that he blesses us enormous power through his dynamic word. Then he lays daily opportunities which allow us live out the purpose he has for us. When we fail to recognize the possibility, the Lord forgives and provides other chances.

We are called to proclaim the great news of salvation for all. Our classrooms and daily settings in a sense become our pulpits. There by word and deed we can shout the gospel message to our children and their families.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank you for setting a perfect example on how to have your purpose in line with the will of your Father. Forgive us for chasing after so many dead ends and missing the true task that you have for us. Help us to be in prayer often so that we can be in line with the plan you have for us.
Amen