

## **Lesson #12**

### **Teaching Outline**

#### **Hope for the Suffering – Healing for the Sinner**

**Mark 1: 40 – 1: 12**

#### **Principle Truth:**

**Our deepest need is not the healing of our bodies, but the healing of our souls.**

#### **Teaching Outline:**

##### **I. The Praying Savior**

**“Neglect of prayer is the locust which devours the strength of the church.” (C. Spurgeon)**

##### **II. The Powerful Savior**

**A. Encounter # 1: Jesus Heals the Leper**

**B. Encounter # 2: Jesus Forgives and Heals the Paralytic**

##### **III. The Faithful Four**

**A. The Value of a “Band of Brothers (Sisters)”**

**B. The Necessity to Persevere through Difficulty**

**C. The Beauty of Holding the Ropes**

**Lesson #12**  
**Series 2 – Story 6**

**Hope for the Suffering - Healing for the Sinner**

Mark 1:40 - 2:12

***OUR DEEPEST NEED IS NOT THE HEALING OF OUR BODIES, BUT  
THE HEALING OF OUR SOULS.***

**Story Outline:**

- I. Jesus, Authority over Suffering and Sin
- II. Leper Touched and Healed
- III. Paralytic Forgiven and Healed

**Life Application Principles:**

1. Jesus desires to heal the deepest hurts of our hearts and our spirits.
2. The touch of Jesus brings new life.
3. Jesus' primary mission was not to heal bodies but to heal souls through the teaching and preaching of the word of God.
4. While caring for all the details of our lives, Jesus is always aware of our deepest needs.
5. Obedience is better than praise.
6. Our disobedience hinders God's work and always has consequences for others.
7. We must be willing to expose our sin to the only One who has the power to heal us.
8. We must be willing to bring others to Jesus no matter the cost.
9. Leprosy is a picture of sin separating us from others and ultimately from God.
10. Jesus' touch makes the unclean, clean.
11. Love and compassion are more important than laws and regulations.
12. Sometimes God is glorified through our healing, but other times through our suffering.
13. Only peace with God and cleansing from God enables a man to cope with life and overcome its challenges.
14. Forgiveness from sin is the formula for victory in this life and the life to come.

## NAME OF JESUS

### Devotional Reading

#### “JESUS OUR BLESSED HOPE”

**Hope**...such a small and common word, yet it is actually one of the most powerful words in the history of mankind. Why do I say that? Because in this corrupt and wickedly sinful world, we all need hope to survive. By the world's definition, hope is *“the feeling that what is wanted can be had or that events will turn out for the best.”* Hope is the emotion that empowers people to look forward in life with *“reasonable confidence”* that things will *probably* get better and turn out favorably in the end. Biblically speaking however, hope is defined as *“strong confidence”* that things will *definitely* get better and turn out favorably in the end. Biblical hope is the firm assurance that God will do exactly what He has promised He will do in His Holy Word. By both definitions, hope makes a difficult situation more bearable. It gives people the physical and emotional strength needed to *“hang on”* in the midst of a difficult and despairing situation. It is what inspires people not to give up. Hope causes a person to be able to say things like: *“I can do this!” “I can keep going a little longer!” “There is light at the end of the tunnel!” “Better days are coming!”* However, the ultimate success of hope lies completely in what and in whom you place your hope.

God, who formed us in His image and knows what we are made of, completely understands this need of hope for human survival. That is why from the moment sin entered the world, He promised to send someone to rescue us from the ravages and penalty of sin. Introduced first as the *“Seed of the woman,”* God sent His holy and beloved Son, Jesus Christ into the world as a beacon of **HOPE** that all the world might be saved through Him. This is another beautiful aspect of WHO Jesus is and WHY He came...**JESUS CHRIST** is the **BLESSED HOPE** of the world who came to redeem and restore man so that man might once again have access to all the blessings of God. It is in Christ and Christ alone that the true, life-giving and everlasting blessing of hope is found.

*“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our **blessed hope**, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession who are zealous for good works.” (Titus 2:11-14)*

Today, we live in a world that is increasingly dark and sinful. There are wars and rumors of wars. Famines, earthquakes and other natural disasters are increasing in number and intensity. Sickness, disease and even plagues are overwhelming the healthcare systems. False teachers are boldly blaspheming the Word of God and false religions are growing at an unparalleled pace. Because the love of God and His truth has grown cold, fear and anxiety are at an all-time high among men in every nation. With corruption and lawlessness overtaking goodness and righteousness at breath-taking speed, chaos and strife have become the new normal in every corner of the world. People are quickly losing their trust in almost everything and everyone they once believed in. As a result, a real sense of hopelessness and despair is threatening to overwhelm and consume the human race. No one is excluded. Even the strongest and most faithful Christians are not immune to falling into the trap of hopelessness and despair, at least for a moment.

What, then, are we to do? How can we survive in the midst of the chaos and increasing darkness all around us? How can we live faithfully, fruitfully and victoriously in this depraved and godless world? There is only one answer...**JESUS CHRIST the BLESSED HOPE.**

*“Why are you downcast, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I again shall praise Him, my salvation and my God.” (Psalm 42:5-6)*

I am convinced based on the pure and reliable truth found in the Word of God, that the only way to live hopefully in this fear-inducing, anxious world is to LOOK UP! To look up to **JESUS CHRIST the BLESSED HOPE of the world** and to CLING to Him no matter what people might say or do to us. In perilous times we must put all our faith, trust and hope in the only One who can keep us safe and deliver us from the darkness. Corrie ten Boom writes, “If you look at the world, you will be distressed. If you look within, you will be depressed, but if you look at Christ, you’ll be at rest.” She understood based on her own life filled with great trial and tribulation that hoping and trusting in the wrong things will lead to increased fear and hopelessness. But hoping and trusting in Jesus Christ who died to deliver us from the ungodly ways of the world will lead to blessings of peace and joy both now in this world and forevermore.

*“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to His great mercy, He has caused us to be born again into a **living hope** through the resurrection of Jesus from the dead to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God’s power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” (1 Peter 1:3-5)*

The Good News is that for those who belong to Jesus Christ the **BLESSED HOPE**, this world is not our home. We are merely “*strangers and aliens*” here. . . just passing through on our way to our true home in the “*Promised Land*” where Christ reigns

supreme as Kings of Kings and Lord of Lords. We have a glorious inheritance awaiting us in a perfect world that is far beyond what our finite minds can perceive. . . a place filled with the peace and joy that we were all created to inhabit forever. Therefore, we can live hopeful lives now in spite of the grim circumstances all around us. Anchored to the truth that lies in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we know that one day this all will end. And then we will leave this world and enter into His glorious and everlasting Kingdom!

*“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven like a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them and they will be His people, and God Himself will be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes and death will be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore for the former things have passed away.” (Revelation 21:3-4)*

Remember, in what and in whom you put your hope is the key to your survival in this increasingly dark and sinful world. Is Christ and Christ alone your **BLESSED HOPE**? Do you carry the **BLESSED HOPE** of Jesus Christ in your heart so that, like the healing balm of Gilead, it soothes your fearful soul and calms your anxious thoughts? Do you know His trustworthy and true promises so well that in times of doubt and fear the Holy Spirit can cause them to rise up in you, turning you from the overwhelming darkness to His glorious Light? Charles Spurgeon rightly said *“If you are asking for some kind of assuring word to soothe your fears, turn to the Bible, for there is in it the very word you need.”*

In what and in whom you put your hope will also have a great impact on those around you. People all over the world are desperately longing for hope and peace in these turbulent times. Paul wrote, *“at one time you were in darkness, but now you are in the light of the Lord. Walk as children of light”* (Ephesians 5:8). Friends, this is our time to shine brightly for Christ! We have the opportunity, perhaps like never before, to bring the **BLESSED HOPE OF JESUS**, the Light of the World, into the darkness all around us. Are you so strongly confident in the promises of God as found in **JESUS the BLESSED HOPE** that you can be used as His vessel to bring His light and His hope into the darkness of this world? Are you willing?

We indeed live in challenging times. But also exciting ones! My prayer for you today, is that you will never stop hoping and trusting in the Lord your God and in Jesus Christ, the **BLESSED HOPE** of the world. I pray you never stop **LOOKING UP** to the One in Whom all the desires of your heart are found and that you never stop **CLINGING** to the Word of God where you will find His great and very sure promises. And never stop **SHINING** His light into the world even if the world hates you because of it. Never stop

LOOKING for Jesus Christ, our **BLESSED HOPE**, because He is coming back, perhaps very soon, to carry all His children safely to His promised inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade!

*“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.” (Romans 15:13)*

*“We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers nor height nor depth, nor anything in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:37-38)*

**HOPE IS .....**

**Holding**

**On tightly to Jesus and His Word,**

**Pressing forward with our eyes fixed on**

**Eternity where there is peace and joy forevermore!**

## THE DOCTRINE

### DEITY OF CHRIST

During the fall of 1775, a man who appeared to be a typical American farmer attempted to book a room in Baltimore's most fashionable hotel. Concerned about the hotel's reputation, the manager refused to rent the room. The man left and took a room in another hotel. Later, the manager learned he had refused a room to Thomas Jefferson, the Vice President of the United States. Immediately he sent an invitation to Jefferson, asking him to return to his hotel as his guest. Jefferson's response was simple and to the point; *"I value your good intentions highly, but if you have no place for an American farmer, you have no right giving hospitality to the Vice President of the USA."*

When Jesus came to live among men over 2000 years ago, people did not recognize the One they met. Jesus is God, always was, and always will be. Yet it was God in the form of a man that the innkeeper of Bethlehem rejected, and who was later to be hated, spurned, and even crucified by similarly blinded humanity as to the true identity of Jesus. When Jesus became a man, he remained God. He was truly the God-Man during his earthly ministry. He voluntarily set aside what was rightfully his to become a man – one of us. His claim to be God was the very element in his earthly ministry that his contemporaries found so hard to accept. Consequently, rejection, betrayal, loss and eventually crucifixion became the path that Jesus, Savior of the world, God in human flesh would walk - all for the love of mankind.

The plan of God's redemption was in place before the foundation of the world. Just what did it mean that the Father would send His only Son to set into motion this great redemptive plan for the sake of lost sinners the world over? What did it mean for Jesus to leave the portals of the heavenly realm to come to earth to become one of us? Misunderstanding surrounding the deity of Christ has been in place from the earliest times. Perhaps the Apostle Paul in an ancient hymn of the early church is most helpful in laying down the elements of Christ's "emptying" when he came to earth as a human baby for the purpose of paying the price of our redemption. What happened when Christ left heaven to become one of us?

*"Have this same attitude in yourselves which was in Christ Jesus, who, although he existed in the form and unchanging essence of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped or asserted, but emptied Himself (without renouncing or diminishing His deity, but only temporarily giving up the outward expression of divine equality and his rightful dignity) by assuming the form of a bond-servant and being made in the likeness of men. After He was found in outward appearance as a man, he humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. And for this reason also, God has highly*

*exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name so that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth and that every tongue will confess and openly acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.” (Philippians 2: 5 – 11)*

### **A Definition of “Kenosis” - What It Means To “Empty Oneself”**

The term “kenosis” is a Greek word used by the Apostle Paul in Philippians 2: 7 to describe what happened when Christ became a man. The term is translated from the phrase, “made himself of no reputation” (terminology that appears in the KJV of the Bible). It is translated “He emptied himself” in the New American Standard Version. One theologian described it, “He stripped Himself of the insignia of mystery.”

For Christ - who was according to John 1 “with God and was God” before time began - to take on “the form of a servant” was indeed a humiliating experience. For ages theologians have faced the dilemma of interpreting the deep meaning of this word, “kenosis.” They cannot deny the plain fact that “Christ emptied himself”, but precisely what was poured out? Can Christ give away part of his deity and remain God? Can God be less than God? The answer is found in a threefold explanation. “Christ emptied himself” by 1. Veiling his glory 2. Accepting the limitations of being a human 3. Voluntarily giving up the independent use of his divine attributes.

Jesus however never ceased to be fully God. One of the chief themes of the gospel of John is to illustrate the deity of Christ through signs – signs of Jesus’ ultimate authority over all things.

*“But these things are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, you might have life through His name” (John 20: 31).*

John’s use of the term “*Son of God*” is a direct reference to Christ’s deity. Jesus was “*the only begotten son of God*” which means He possessed the nature and character of his Father while on earth. He was God. John’s gospel opens like a trumpet declaring the truth of Jesus’ deity: “*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*” (John 1:1). Describing Jesus when he became a man, John further writes, “*And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*” (John 1:14). Therefore the “*kenosis*” was a voluntary self-emptying, not a self extinction of deity on the part of Christ.

The willingness of Jesus to limit himself in becoming a man gives us confidence that he fully understands our lives and all that concerns us. Because he has experientially known firsthand the frustrations of our humanity, we have a “*God of all comfort*” (2 Cor. 1:3)

upon whom we can depend in the most challenging of circumstances. The Bible says that Christ emptied himself willingly by accepting the limitations of humanity, but at all times, he remained God. He surrendered the independent use of some attributes that as God, He shared with His Father. I mention only three such attributes here which as a man, Jesus retained, yet chose to empty himself of:

1. Omniscience: Mark 13: 32
2. Omnipresence: John 1; 14
3. Omnipotence: John 11: 41 – 42

The best expression of the **omnipotence** of Christ (possessing the all powerful nature of God) is found in the miracles recorded by all four gospel writers, many of which were witnessed first hand by Jesus' followers. Even though Jesus was known as a miracle worker, he performed miracles through the power of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 12:28). He voluntarily laid aside his own power to do them and relied on the Holy Spirit. On numerous occasions He made it clearly known that he was doing the work of His Father. *"Then answered Jesus and said unto them, verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father do; for what things he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise."* (John 5: 19).

During his earthly ministry, like His Father, Jesus was **omniscient** (possessing the all knowing nature of God), although he did not know the time of his Second Coming. He was also, like His Father, **omnipresent** (possessing the attribute of being present in all places at all times), but when He became flesh, limiting himself to being in one place at one time. He was omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, yet he prayed to God to raise his friend, Lazarus, from the dead. Jesus never lost these divine attributes, but rather, in the process of emptying himself, **CHOSE** instead not to use them.

### **Why Jesus Emptied Himself**

From time to time we hear of someone who leaves a superior paying job for less pay and what appears to us to be lesser job. We are left to wonder why that person did such a thing. There may be many reasons involved in such a decision that we will never understand, however when we consider the willingness of Jesus to empty himself and become a man, we are certainly left to wonder why. We will never completely understand all that was involved in the mind of God in sending His son to redeem lost mankind, but the Bible does give us several specific reasons.

1. **LOVE.** The love of God for us was certainly one of the chief motivating factors in the "kenosis". The love of God is the foundation for every aspect of the gospel. Before Jesus came, he knew he would be rejected and die for the sins of the world. He told his disciples: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his

life for his friends (John 15: 13). Paul also states: “But God demonstrated His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8).

2. **TO REVEAL GOD.** John twice recorded that Christ came to reveal the Father (John 1:14, 18; 14:7-11). If Jesus had not emptied himself, sinful man would not have been able to understand and witness that revelation. Jesus knew men could only understand so much. Therefore, God had to empty himself to become a man, so man might better understand God. God reveals himself to us progressively. As we grow in faith and maturity, we grow in our understanding of the Bible and learn increasingly more about the God who loves us. Jesus recognized this principle when he emptied himself to reveal God.
  
3. **SALVATION.** Jesus emptied himself to provide for our salvation. It was through one man the world was lost (Adam), so through one man the world would be saved (Christ). Paul speaks to this relationship between Adam and Christ in Romans 5:12-21:

<b>ADAM</b>	<b>CHRIST</b>
Sin entered upon all	Salvation provided for all
Death for all	Eternal life for all
Sin nature	New nature
Disobedience	Obedience
Sin Abounded	Grace abounded
Imputed Sin	Imputed righteousness

4. **EXAMPLE.** Jesus emptied himself to demonstrate an example to us of how we ought to behave in our own relationships with others. Examining the context Philippians 2 and the giving of the “*kenosis*,” it admonishes the believer to live a life of humility because of the beauty of Christ’s humility.

The Philippians were told to “*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.*” They were instructed to solve their social problems by following his example. Paul told the men in Ephesus to “*love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it*” (Eph. 5:25). Many times conflicts arise among Christians because an individual stands up for what he believes is rightfully his. Jesus was willing to empty himself of that which was rightfully his in order to accomplish the will of God in a far more important matter.

As we consider the glory that Jesus left to come to earth and His willingness to empty Himself of his rightful position, we are left wondering if there is anything so important in our own lives that could not be set aside to serve him.

Increasingly in our lessons of the Life of Jesus we see Jesus' contemporaries struggling with accepting His deity. After examining what Christ did and why He did it, we are left to marvel at the grace of an all knowing, all powerful and ever present God who understood fully the necessity of sending His Son to save us. Could salvation have been brought about if God had delegated the suffering to one of us? One of His creatures? No! ONLY GOD HIMSELF CAN RECONCILE MAN TO HIMSELF. "*A Savior not quite God would be like a bridge broken at the farthest end.*" The consistent teaching of the Bible is that God suffered; that is why we can say "*salvation is of the Lord.*" God needed a ransom so that man might be forgiven, but only He could meet his own demands. Therefore, in salvation, God both declares us guilty and pays our debt. Only he can satisfy his own requirements. A savior less than God would be disqualified; God must do it himself. If Christ is not God, then God has not saved us, and the worship that Christ accepted and his ability to forgive sins would indeed have been blasphemous.

The Deity of Christ is the foundation of Christian doctrine. It is not enough to believe in Christ, but to believe in a Christ who is able to forgive and to save. To believe in a Christ who is less than God is to have faith that is misplaced. It was the Council of Nicaea that divided Christendom forever. On the one side are those who speak well of Christ but affirm he is less than God; and on the other are those who believe he is "*God of very God.*" These two streams of thought flow in different directions never to meet. Mankind is either found in one stream or the other. We should be eternally grateful that those who have preceded us in the history of the church insisted and even died for this foundational tenant of the faith. The early church fathers insisted that we believe in the Christ who is God. In his own person He alone unites God and man; in His death He reconciles man to God. Salvation or damnation; heaven or hell. The historic Nicene Creed is a powerful statement of the orthodox faith adopted by the early Christian church in opposition to multiple heresies. It reads as follows:

### ***The Nicene Creed***

*We believe in one God the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth of all that is, seen and unseen.*

*We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through Him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scripture; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead. And His kingdom will have no end.*

*We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. Who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sin. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.*

*(Taken from the Book of Common Prayer and the Lutheran Book of Worship)*

## Questions for Reflection

*Read Mark 1:40-45; Matthew 8:1-4*

1. How did the leper approach Jesus? What did he do and say to show Jesus that he wanted help? What does this tell you about the leper's heart?
2. How did Jesus respond? What was especially meaningful to you about His response?
3. Why do you think Jesus commanded the leper to show himself to the priest after being healed? (skim Leviticus 14:1-32 for help)
4. From a spiritual perspective, how does the disease of leprosy point to the deeper and more pressing disease of sin? (see Leviticus 13, Romans 3:23 & 6:23)
5. Read Mark 1:45. What was the unfortunate result of the leper's disobedience to Jesus' simple command? Has there ever been a time when your disobedience hindered the ongoing work of the Kingdom? Explain.
6. Sin and disobedience are always a barrier to healing and blessing. Is God convicting you of any sin that needs to be confessed and brought to Him for cleansing today so that healing and victory might take place in your life? What will be your response?

*Read Mark 2:1-12; Matthew 9:1-8*

7. What extraordinary thing did the 4 men do to bring their friend to Jesus? What did Jesus “*see*” in these men that moved Him to respond?
  
8. How did the religious leaders react to Jesus’ actions? What did Jesus “*see*” or “*perceive*” about their hearts? Does this comfort or alarm you? Explain.
  
9. What was the deeper need of the paralyzed man that Jesus knew needed healing? How do you know?
  
10. Why do you think it was important for Jesus to first forgive the man’s sin before physically healing him?
  
11. Have you ever faced barriers or great obstacles in trying to bring a friend or family member to Jesus? What did you do? What were the results?
  
12. Share a time when you personally brought a physical, mental, emotional or spiritual problem to Jesus. How did He respond? How did this experience impact your faith and change your life?
  
13. **Our deepest need is not the healing of our bodies, but the healing of our souls.** What would Jesus say is your deepest spiritual need today? Will you entrust that need to Him today, believing, like the leper, that He CAN make you clean?

## **BLESSED HOPE**

In what and in whom does your hope lie? How has the Lord encouraged you through His word to persevere in the midst of great trial? Write down your testimony and then pray God will give you the opportunity to share His hope with others that they might be encouraged and strengthened in their times of darkness and fear.

## **SALVATION CHALLENGE**

Have you ever come to that place in your life where you realized you were “*UNCLEAN*” and destined for a life of darkness and eternal separation from God? Have you ever sought Jesus for the personal cleansing you need in order to leave behind your life of sin and be fully restored and forever healed? If not, will you deliberately come to Him now so you can be made new?