

BIBLE STUDY
February 1, 2021

THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Job 7: 1-4, 6-7

Mark 1: 29-39

1 Corinthians 9: 16-19, 22-23

1. Job 7: 1-4, 6-7

- ***A summary of the book of Job from the New American Bible's introduction to the book of Job: The prologue (chapters 1-2) provides the setting for Job's testing. When challenged by Satan's questioning of Job's sincerity, the Lord gives leave of a series of catastrophes to afflict Job. Three friends come to console him. Job breaks out in complaint (chapter 3), and a cycle of speeches begins. Job's friends insist that his plight can only be a punishment for personal wrongdoing and an invitation from God to repent. Job rejects their inadequate explanation and challenges God to respond (chapters 3-31). A young bystander, Elihu, now delivers four speeches in support of the views of the three friends (chapters 32-37). In response to Job's plea that he be allowed to see God and hear directly the reason for his suffering, the Lord answers (38: 1—42:6), not by explaining divine justice, but by cataloguing the wonders of creation. Job is apparently content with this, and in an epilogue (42: 7-17), the Lord restores Job's fortune.***
- Vv. 1-4: Our selection comes from Job's response to his friends' explanation for the reason for his misfortune. Job laments how hard life is. It is drudgery (hard menial or dull work). His days are like those of a slave or a hired hand. His life is without purpose and his nights are filled with trouble. He can't sleep. He tosses and turns, waiting for the time to get up. The night drags on. His night give him no rest.
- Vv. 6-7: His life speeds forward like the weaver's shuttle. They end without hope. Life is like the wind---fleeting, nothing you can hold on to, it comes and goes. Job gives up hope that he will ever be happy again.

2. Mark 1: 29-39

- After expelling the unclean spirit from the man in the synagogue at Capernaum, Jesus cures Simon's mother in law who is ill with a fever. The description of her healing can be symbolically interpreted as Baptism. Jesus grabs her by the hand and pulls her up as if from the waters of the baptismal pool. The fever leaves her—sin is forgiven. She waits on them. The word for waiting on them is diakonia, which refers to ministry. After being baptized and saved from her sin, she ministers to others.
- Jesus then cures many people in the town at sunset. The whole town gathering outside the door gives us a vivid picture of the people's need for healing. Jesus commands the evil spirits not to speak, presumably so they will not identify him. Jesus always commands the evil spirits and those healed to be silent because he wants people to come to him out of faith

and not out of a desire for magical healings. When a person is healed it is because they have come to faith. Everyone must do that on their own.

- Jesus rises early in the morning and goes to pray. Peter finds him and is caught up with Jesus' success and popularity. Jesus surprises him by telling him that he is moving on to other towns because that is what his mission is.
- There is an interesting discussion that probably there existed a written piece that collected stories of Jesus' miracles. Mark probably used this written account as a source for his Gospel. But, just reading about Jesus' miracles would give the wrong impression of him. People could get the idea that he is a miracle worker only or a magician. Mark writes his Gospel to show that Jesus is primarily a suffering Messiah. He saves us by embracing the Cross that leads him to the Resurrection.
- "It is not just that Jesus healed Simon's mother-in-law or the crowd of people at sundown; it is that by his death on the cross, in whose benefits that we partake at every Eucharist, he continues to heal the broken hearted.

3. 1 Corinthians 9: 16-19, 22-23

- Paul is defending himself. It seems that the people of Corinth questioned Paul's credentials as an apostle. They think that he is not on the same level as the Twelve. There is even some evidence that Paul was not very impressive as a preacher. Here he argues in his defense. He claims the same rights as the other apostles. He says that he is entitled to be paid but has never claimed a salary.
- V. 12-14: Paul says he has never demanded a salary because he did not want to put any obstacles in the way of the Gospel. He says that just as those who ministered in the temple and at the altar shared in the sacrifices as a benefit. So, his recompense for preaching the Gospel is to live the Gospel.
- V. 15-18: Paul insists he is not looking for a salary. He says that preaching the Gospel is enough of a reward for him. It is his obligation and it is his stewardship. He wants to offer the Gospel free of charge.
- Vv. 19-23: Paul says that although he is free to ask for a salary he is also free for the salvation of all. He wants to be free to be all things to all people. He wants to meet everybody where they are and then bring them to Christ. He does this for the sake of the Gospel so that he can have a share in the Gospel.