

The title for today's message is: **Everyone Needs Time Out!**

Mark said: ***And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he (meaning Jesus) departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed.***

Grace and peace to you from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

At the height of His ministry, Jesus was continually surrounded by crowds of people. They pressed around Him everywhere He went.

So much so, He may have wanted to yell at them, you know saying something like; "Go home, give Me a break, leave Me alone.

But the People wanted to see Him, to be near Him, and to touch Him. Particularly those who had serious needs.

Now in today's Gospel, Jesus heals Simon Peter's mother-in-law, of a deadly fever.

And as always it took no time at all for the towns people there to hear about His healing. Now this was quite amazing

I mean there were no telephones, radios, email nor texting. Yet everyone who came to see Jesus also brought all their sick and demon possessed.

That's right the whole town gathered in front of Simon's door, seeking Jesus to heal all their sick.

Now the next morning, while it was still dark, Jesus again got up, left the house, and went off to a solitary place, where He again prayed.

Now Simon Peter, and the other disciples seeing Jesus gone, went to look for Him, once they found Him they said: ***“Everyone is looking for you!”***

Jesus replied, ***“Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out.”***

Now our text makes it clear that, from time to time, Jesus needed to take a time out by Himself. I don't know, has anyone here today ever felt like that?

I'm sure you have, yet when Jesus needed time out He would rise very early in the morning and go off to a solitary place, alone.

It certainly wouldn't hurt for You and I to learn to take a “time out” as well. Today our lives often become frantic and chaotic.

My friends, taking a time out is not a sign of weakness, nor does it make us less of a Christian. It's a part of Christian living, just as taking up our cross.

Yes, even Jesus found it necessary to go out on His own away from people to pray to His Father, and to focus on His mission.

That's remarkable when you consider what we know about Jesus the Son of God. Jesus took on flesh and lived and dealt with things as we do.

Jesus knew very well what a powerful force prayer can be and was in everyone's life including His own.

Now there's a true story that comes out of World War II, that I would like to share with you. You may have heard it before.

After the Battle of the Bulge, a German officer was describing the capture of an American unit early in the fighting.

This unit had in its possession a box which contained a cake. What was so remarkable about the cake was.

It had been sent to an American soldier from Boston, and it was still fresh. So the German officer described his feelings about the cake in this way.

He said, when he realized that the Americans had the resources to fly over cakes from home even in the midst of a global war.

He knew they would never defeat an enemy that had such resources for the waging of the battle.

You and I have a resource that can help us in life's daily battles as well, if only we'll make time for it. What is it? Its time alone with God. Yes, a time out.

Its one-on-One communication with the Creator, and Sustainer of life. You know, we, human creatures, are very strange.

We'll believe almost anything, except what millions of people have dedicated their lives over the past two thousand years.

That the God of all the universe is available to us through prayer. Yet, Its so easy to neglect that which is most important to our lives.

We think our job's, our family, and our social life is the most important things in our life. But there not. It's God and God alone.

So many people whom Jesus met needed some kind of healing. Think how many people are on our prayer list today. Yet people in Jesus' time were not nearly as fortunate as we.

They lived in pre-scientific times. A simple infection could bring an agonizing death. Epidemics could wipe out entire villages.

Many of the diseases that vexed people in Jesus' time are unheard of today. We're so fortunate to live in a time when doctors can do so much for us, that is of course, only with the help of God.

I could not even imagine a world without the advantages of modern medicine. But we must keep in mind that doctors are human beings, too.

And not all of them have the interest of the patient at heart. There was a News Service story sometime back about a Massachusetts doctor.

He was a graduate of Harvard Medical School no less, who had his medical license suspended.

It seems that the good doctor left a patient on the operating table midway through spinal surgery. I'm glad he wasn't my doctor.

This so called doctor, an orthopedic surgeon, needed to deposit a check at his local bank.

Instead of taking care of it after his shift was over, he left the patient with an open incision in his back, just lying there on the table.

And after a 35-minute trip to the bank, the doctor returned to the operating room, and finished the surgery a few hours later.

Again as you can see, not every doctor has the welfare of his patient at heart. However, Jesus does, He never fails too.

His heart went out to all the sick, and hurting, that's why all the people there came to Him. But healing physical bodies was not Jesus' primary mission.

Look If healing people were Jesus' main purpose for coming into the world, He could have simply set up a clinic in downtown Jerusalem.

And I'm sure it would have been flooded with needy people day, and night. But it would never have been possible for Him to see them all. That is without Divine intervention.

Jesus' mission was much bigger than that. His mission was to touch the lives of a few men, and women.

Who, on the Day of Pentecost, would be transformed into a mighty spiritual army, the church of Jesus Christ.

And over the centuries, this spiritual army would build tens of thousands of hospitals, schools and all manner of charitable institutions all over the world.

And millions of people would be touched by the ministry of the humble Galilean through His church.

His disciples were given the power to heal many more individuals something that was Christ's plan from the beginning.

That's why he needed time out from His healing ministry. He needed to spend time with His Father, and He needed to refocus His ministry.

Jesus said to those disciples who came to find him: ***“Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out.”***

He came that He might preach the kingdom of God. And thus Jesus needed time out--to talk to His Father.

And to focus on His primary mission. Yes even Jesus prayed. But are you spending the time you need in prayer?

Do you need to refocus your life? Look, You and I live in a fast-changing and complex world.

If we were not careful, we will find ourselves ignoring the really crucial needs in our lives. But how do we do it?

How do we find the time for this essential practice of taking time out to connect with God, and to reflect on our lives?

Here's a vital truth. The best time for prayer, isn't found, it's made. Did you catch that? You will never find time for prayer, and reflection, you have to make time.

My friends If Jesus needed to spend time in prayer, how much more do we need to spend time in prayer?

If He needed to call time out in order to refocus His ministry, how much more do we need to reflect upon our lives, and refocus our priorities?

But remember, we will never find the time; we will have to make the time. Now I realize that it's just about that time in our service.

Where we start thinking about all the stuff we were going to do after the service today. But before you do, take a time out to pray.

There is an invaluable resource available to us all. Let God help you determine those things that are most important in your life.

Amen.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all. Amen.