

**April 3, 2016 - 11:00 a.m.**

**Pastor Ben Gutierrez**

## **Agents of Grace: Shared Grace**

### **Scripture: Mark 4–8**

Summary: Pastor Ben Gutierrez begins a new series entitled *Agents of Grace*. In part 1, he talks about the importance of sharing the grace of Jesus Christ with others.

And now beginning today we start a sermon series called *Agents of Grace*. For those of us that have experienced that grace, we're going to learn now how to share it with others. Today we'll talk about sharing grace. Next week we'll talk about how to extend the message of forgiving grace; how God's grace can forgive anyone, no matter how low or how deep in sin. No matter what your background, God can cleanse you from all unrighteousness.

Then we'll talk the following week about liberating grace; how God's grace can liberate us from the traditions and the legalism and all the burdens that we have placed on ourselves so that we can worship God freely and also to strip ourselves of the biases and prejudice of all the people that we once would never encounter and to give us a greater love for those people as well. The following week, we'll talk about leading grace; the fact that it is a call to arms that whatever size congregation the Lord has given us—whether it's masses or just a few people or just a child—that He will give us the boldness to live for Jesus Christ as a child of God and to be able to give that graceful example to others to follow.

And then the final series, of course, sufficient grace. No matter your thorns, no matter your struggles, no matter the challenges in your life, God's grace is sufficient. Where sin abounds, grace much more abounds.

But today we talk about being an agent of grace, sharing that grace. For those of us that have experienced the saving grace we talked about last week, Easter Sunday, where we have at one time taken to the knee and said, "Oh God, I am a sinner. I am not as perfect like you are. But I believe that only you can save me from my sins. So Lord I've tried; I give up; forgive me of my sin. I'm not perfect like you. Forgive me of my sin; come into my heart; save me, cleanse me

from my sin. Now give me a power source that's able to conquer sin and obey you and honor you throughout my life. And then I promise to live that life that honors you as a statement of gratitude. Thank you."

Those of us that have given our hearts to Christ, it is now where we talk about sharing grace; being an agent of grace, sharing that grace to others. Getting out of our comfort zone and extended that message, that good news, to other people, no matter who they are. They may be in our comfort zone, but the Lord today in Scripture is going to encourage us to get out of our comfort zone and to stretch us and to say, "Extend that good news of saving grace to those that you may not interact with a lot."

There is nothing like getting good news. Good news is liberating; good news is so exciting. We have it all in our lives. I don't know, as parents you like to occasionally on birthdays surprise your children or vacations. Probably the best are on YouTube are of parents when they want to spring the good news that they children are going to Disney World. The kids literally convulse in excitement. I mean you talk about just screams of joy; ear-piercing even when you watch it.

I remember this one video. There was this one where the kids were taking a nap and they woke up and they said, "Look to your left," and they're wiping the sleep out of their eyes, and there is the castle, and wow, the kids go nuts.

There's actually one video that's kind of funny. I gather from the video they told the child, "Hey, we're driving to Grandma's house, so go ahead and take a nap and we'll wake you up when we get to Grandma's house." Well, they were planning on going to Disney World. So the kids takes a nap; they drive to Disney World; they say, "Wake up! Wake up! Look where we are!" And the kid sees that arch in Florida, that big Mickey Mouse and Minnie, and you know that's the time where you scream. And the kid looks up and he starts crying, "No!" She goes, "What's wrong?" He said, "You said we were going to Grandma's house!"

So good news, bad news. Sometimes it doesn't work. Those piercing screams of good news. If you thought that was blood-curdling, piercing screams, try giving your daughter a brand-new puppy. I have done that. Now one thing I did not do is I did not research all the work you have to do to take care of a puppy, but there is something about having that one moment.

And so I remember, I texted my wife. I said, "I'm coming in the driveway. Get your phone ready" so we had two videos, two-directional, me coming in the door, her following the kids, and as soon as we brought—I said, "Hey," and they said, "Daddy!" I said, "Hey, there's someone I want you to meet." And I come with this little white, fluffy marshmallow puff of a dog, little guy, 2 and 1/2 pounds, and you thought Disney was a blood-curdling screams? These screams broke glass. They were like, "Ahh!" and the puppy's freaking out and everything.

But that moment of good news. I've watched that video so much. But listen, more than Disney, more than getting a puppy, have you ever experienced the opportunity of sharing the saving grace of Jesus Christ, literally God allows us, as the psalm says, the oracles of God in our mouth and to have the ministry of reconciliation and literally, right in front of your eyes, He is literally rebirthing that person spiritually.

It is an amazing experience, and God wants you and me to share that grace. That's why we're giving away Chick fil-A cards. But it is great in case you're not a person that can talk, just kind of something to instigate conversation, just to say, "Hey, would you come to church with me?" Or "Here's why I'm doing this."

The Lord says it's not just a task. It's incumbent upon a believer; it's a responsibility. If God changed your soul, then don't you want to share the good news of His saving grace? Today, we're going to talk about sharing the message of grace, sharing grace with somebody, and so all throughout the message, until the very end, I'm going to ask you at the very end to pray for somebody.

But I want you to think of a name; think of somebody. Picture their face in your mind. Think of a name of someone that needs to hear the message of grace from you—a coworker, maybe; in my case, a loved one. Maybe it's someone at school. Maybe you say, "Oh, but Ben, it's just too hard. They are too quick-witted. They talk too fast. They talk circles around me. They are just so hard."

We're going to hear from Scripture today that nobody is too hard for the grace of God to pierce their heart. God can change anybody. Think of a name. Think of a name. Family member, loved one, person at work, school, a neighbor down the street. Just think of someone and say, "Lord, put that person on my heart," and at the end of the service, wherever you're at, whether you come here or wherever you are, we're going to pray passionately in our spirits quietly to the Lord and say, "Lord, give me courage and boldness to share the message of grace."

I want to take you to a passage where Jesus had to teach His disciples this very truth. To get out of your comfort zone, never write off anybody or people that you may think are too hard, too cold, too far gone. Never, never underestimate the power of the message of the grace of God. His disciples—if you can picture a map on stage I'll just kind of direct you here—the disciples wanted to stay in their comfort zone. So if you can imagine this table and screen maybe as the Sea of Galilee and the Israel area. And over here would be what they would refer to as Israel. It was founded by the twelve tribes of Israel.

This side was very religious; the disciples grew up here. This was friendly fire if there were any attacks. There were a lot of religious people. The disciples, up to this point, stayed right here. They shared, they taught, they preached, but they just stayed here. This was their comfort zone. There was a moment in their ministry where Jesus says, "We're going to go to a place you've never been before, over on this side of the Sea of Galilee."

This side of the Sea of Galilee is called the "Decapolis." Decapolis. Deca means "ten"; polis is the Greek word for "city." It was referred to as the place of ten cities, Decapolis. At the time, two thousand years ago in the first century there were ten prominent cities. Now there are a lot more.

This was a very pagan, very dark place. They did not talk to people here. This place over here thought they were all religious because it was founded by the twelve tribes of Israel. And you know in the eastern mind the heritage is very important. And pictures and metaphors, they

thought about that a lot; so their heritage is in the twelve tribes of Israel; their ancestry, the twelve tribes of Israel.

Judah at the south, just religious people, but over here, their heritage, even though it was called Decapolis, place of ten cities, their heritage years and years and years before the first century was founded in seven pagan nations. This was unclean. This was as dirty place. In fact, if you read Joshua 3, it actually tells you the seven pagan nations that formed the heritage of the Decapolis. In fact, I'll just read it, Joshua 3:10, they were over here, and the Lord instructed Joshua to kick them out and settle them over there. So Joshua 3:30 it says, "And Joshua said, "By this you shall know that the living God is among you, and that He will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Hivites and the Perizzites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Jebusites."

And in Acts 13:19 we learn that he did drive them out. So when the disciples were ministering, this was the Jewish area, the heritage, the holy land. These are dark people; their religion was the Baal cult. They sacrificed not only animals but children on blazing hot irons. In the Old Testament it was called "the altar of Tobit," and archaeologists have found deep layers and acres wide of baby's coffins over here. So it was unclean.

These people, in their minds, were lost. Their valued animal was a pig; that's unclean. They have superstitions about these people that it was so evil that if you began to sail near this region—this wasn't true, but in the cosmic conflict, in their superstitions (and we have superstitions today even) in the first century, if you get too close to this, there's going to be some kind of butting of spiritual heads and thunder, lightning; there's going to be those reactions if you get near this place. So the disciples just quaintly stayed right here to share the message of grace.

The Lord said, "We have had some great miracles here. But everybody, *everybody* needs to hear the message of grace. There is nobody outside of God's reach." So the Lord forced His disciples to go there. They, in their bias and prejudice, would call that the place of the devil. They called it "the other side." They never went there. The Lord had to get them, dragging tooth and nail, to get over there to realize that there are people that need grace.

And so He's getting them out of their comfort zone. And I want to encourage you, too, there may be some people that you think are so far gone, but if we really believe last Sunday, the power of the Resurrection, the power of the Resurrection that lives within us; if we have the ability with the same power source, the same power that raised God from the dead that can provide us courage and boldness, then we can share with those that are just so far different than us. And you'll find that they, frankly, are not so different; they are just—it's a façade; they are just lost souls in need of Christ.

And unlike a Disney trip and unlike a puppy, sometimes people just don't know what to ask for; they don't know what's missing in their life; and sometimes you have to be that agent of grace to step into their world and say, "Listen, you've been wandering and filling these voids in your life with this, and this person and this activity and this in your life, but the reason why things aren't quite right is because you are missing the grace of God."

The disciples had the same fears we do, and so I want to take you to the time where He says, “We’re going to conquer your fears and we’re going to go over there and we’re going to be agents of grace.”

So Mark 7:31, note this verse. We will read this verse at the very end of the sermon. Mark 7:31, “Then Jesus returned to the region of Tyre,” which is over here in Israel, “to Sidon,” which is a little north in Israel, “to the Sea of Galilee to the region of Decapolis.” Now He’s over here. And when He gets offshore, verse 32 of Mark 7, they brought to Him a man that was deaf, had a speech impediment, and begged Him to lay hands on him.

Verse 33, there were so many people, He had to take him away from the crowds. People were thronging to Jesus, wanting to hear about this grace, and the disciples are just amazed as to the power of God. They are so hungry for it. A place I would not have gone if Jesus hadn’t made me get out of my comfort zone.

We learn later in Mark 7 that there were people that were blind. This was the account where He puts His finger in the man’s ears and says, *Ephphatha*, be opened, and they were like, “How is it that this man is making the lame leap, the dumb speak, and the blind to see?” People are so hungry for the grace of God.

The disciples are being students as to the power of God. They are like, “I get it. I get it.” They had stayed there three days. Mark 7 to Mark 8, three days’ difference. They are here; they are listening to Jesus’ teachings; they are starving to death; they are hungry. So they wonder how they are going to feed them, and right now we’re going to read the account of the feeding of the four thousand. The feeding of the five thousand happened over there in the Jewish side; the feeding of the four thousand happened right here, Mark 8:1.

*In those days, the multitudes being very great and having nothing to eat, Jesus called His disciples to Him and said to them, “I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat. And if I send them away hungry to their own houses, they will faint on the way; for some of them have come from afar.” Then His disciples answered Him, “How can one satisfy these people with bread here in the wilderness?” He asked them, “How many loaves do you have?” And they said, “Seven.”*

*So He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. And He took the seven loaves and gave thanks, broke them and gave them to His disciples to set before them; and they set them before the multitude. They also had a few small fish; and having blessed them, He said to set them also before them. So they ate and were filled.*

The word *filled* is the Greek word *echortasthēsan*, which means “stuffed.”

You ever get that holiday meal, that favorite meal, Thanksgiving meal, and you just have to be rolled out of the chair? They said, “How could we even satisfy people here, Jesus,” and Jesus said, “That’s the point. That’s the point. You try to do it on your own effort, you’ll give them a morsel, maybe. You leave it in my hands,” and He left them completely satisfied. And then a

spiritual picture. He said, verse 8, they were filled, and after they collected all the remaining fragments, there were seven baskets full. Seven left over.

Well, you say, that's great. Neat. Remember, to them this is significant. To us, it's just a number; but this was founded by the seven pagan nations. Is Jesus saying He's the bread of life for them? Is that a stretch? Well, push PAUSE here for a moment. I told you they had a feeding of the five thousand over here in the Jewish area? Founded in the how many tribes of Israel? John 6:12, when they were over here having the feeding of the five thousand, so when they were filled, Jesus said to His disciples in the twelve tribes of Israel area, "Pick up all the fragments that remain. Don't leave anything. They gathered all the fragments and it filled 12 baskets of bread."

Jesus was saying, "I'm the bread of life for them and I am the bread of life for them. People need grace, and I don't care who you are, and I know you guys want to stay here, but there are lost souls that need the grace of God and I am the bread of life for them. Get out of your comfort zone and be an agent of grace."

Now I have to think that if you and I were in that situation, sure, God had to calm our fears, but look at all the results. Yes, Lord, I will share the grace of God, the message of God. I will be an agent of grace if those are the kind of results you give me. Who wouldn't want to share the grace of God? Who wouldn't want to walk into a store and share the gospel and everyone take it in. Who wouldn't want to be on a plane in turbulence and say, "If you were to die today, would you meet Jesus?" How many of us would want everyone to get saved in the stores, in the planes? Who wouldn't want to share the grace of God?

But listen: The Lord says, "I want you to share about the grace of God regardless of the results. You leave the results to me. Your responsibility is just to be an agent of grace, just to deliver that good news. You leave the results to me, because the results will not always be like this."

Now, unfortunately, ministry isn't like that. You won't take your Chick-fil-A card to somebody in the mall and all of a sudden the whole mall bows their head and accepts Jesus Christ. Sometimes it doesn't work that way. Sometimes you get mocked. This could happen, but it's up to God.

But He was teaching them to get out of their comfort zone. But here's the interesting detail about this story. This was not the first time He'd been here. This was the second time He went to Decapolis. He had been here before. This was the second time Jesus dragged His disciples there. It was unwilling, but He dragged them. This was the second time when they experienced these rewards.

He earlier, months earlier wanted to teach them the same story about how to reach out to people outside of your comfort zone. So I want to take you a few months earlier. I want you to turn back a few chapters to Mark 4. Let's study the first time He visited there, the first time.

Jesus is with His disciples, and they are in this religious area, and then finally He wants to teach His disciples to get out of their comfort zone. And look, this is nice, this is great, but I want you to expand your thinking and think that the grace of God and the message of Jesus Christ is for

people that maybe are not lovely and maybe you have a prejudice and a bias against. It is for everybody, and you need to get out of your comfort zone and share grace.

And so He says, “Guys, we’re going to the other side.” And they are like, “Hold on. God of heaven and earth, we don’t go there.” Sometimes we tell God that. “God, you’re the creator of the world, you know everything; I’m not going to do that. Lord, we don’t go over there. I’ve heard rumors. They are horrible.”

Look at Mark 4:35, “On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, ‘Let us cross over to the other side.’” Time out. Those people are unclean. They kill their children. They sacrifice to Baal. They involve themselves in sexual immorality in order for Baal to come out of the abyss, in their mind, and have a fertile crop. They offer their children on the altars of Baal. They have even more grotesque things than that. Their valued animal is a pig—that’s unclean. We don’t go there. We’ve never gone there. You’re kidding me!”

And the Lord is saying, “Listen to me: we’re going to the other side because everybody, everybody needs the message of grace.”

So they’re like, “Okay.” They are timid and here they go. Mark 4:36. Leaving the crowds, He took them in a boat just as He was, and the other boats were with them, and a great windstorm arose. The waves were breaking into the boat and the boat was already filling, but Jesus was in the stern, asleep on a cushion.

Just like their greatest fears, they are like, this is what you get when you mess with evil. The storm, fishermen are afraid. They go down to Jesus and say, “Teacher, don’t you care if we’re perishing? Don’t you care, Jesus?” Fishermen are afraid on this boat. If you look at the contour of the land, at times this little seven mile by thirteen mile lake, the contour of the land, the wind whips and you can get six-foot, eight-foot, even a few years ago literally in Israel ten-foot swells on this little lake.

Fishermen are afraid; the water is filling the boat; and this is playing into their whole superstition. They are like, “This is what you get when you mess with evil.” This would be like us today saying, “Lord, I know you have called me to a certain place,” but I get a flat tire on the way or I get an extra bill, and we’re like, “I’m going to take this as this is not God’s will.”

But the Lord is asleep on the boat because His will is being done. And sometimes we kick and we scream about going out and sharing the gospel with somebody, but the Lord is like, “This is exactly what we’re doing. And oh, by the way, I did not say we’re going to try to go to the other side or make our best attempt to go to the other side; we are going to touch down on the other side.”

By the way, believer, you might have thought of this verse, but while He was asleep on the boat, Colossians 1:17 says that in Jesus Christ everything is preeminent in Him and in Jesus Christ everything holds together. While He was asleep on the boat, He was holding the world together. “We’re going to the other side.” And the disciples are like, “Great!”

Mark 4:39, “When Jesus woke up, he rebuked the wind and said to the waves, ‘Hush!’ The wind ceased, there was a great calm, and He said to them, ‘Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?’ and they were filled with great fear and said to one another, ‘How is this that the winds and the seas obey Him? How is it that He is able to talk to the spiritual realm and just calm it?’” What a man. What a God/man.

Then they get onshore the first time. What are they going to experience? They just went through this wicked storm. They get onshore, step off the boat. Were there crowds? Were their people thronging, praising Jesus? Let’s read. Mark 5:1, “Then they came to the other side of the Sea, to the country of the Gerasenes.” And when Jesus stepped out of the boat, here is that they experienced: not crowds; not masses; not people hungry the thirsty for righteousness. “There immediately met him, out of the tombs, a man with an unclean spirit.” He was demon-possessed.

Verse 3, he lived in the tombs. That’s unclean. No one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain. Verse 4, he often was bound with fetters, shackles around his feet, and chains, and he broke them apart, broke the chains apart. He broke the shackles into pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him. Night and day he was in the tombs, and in the mountains he was shouting and crying and cutting himself. And when he was Jesus hit the shore, he locked on Him and ran right for Him.

What a welcoming committee! Can you imagine what the disciples were thinking? They’re like, “I heard these people are crazy and you don’t mess with those people because they are dark. I don’t know what’s over there, but they are crazy.” And so now on our way Jesus has taken us out of our comfort zone, we get into the storm, and all of a sudden we touch down and their welcoming committee is this demonic guy in the tombs, screaming, cutting himself, shouting, and all of a sudden he latches eyes with you and starts booking it right for you. I promise you, I’d be on the boat. I’d be paddling that boat. I would forsake my other disciples and deny them unapologetically. I would be gone.

Can you imagine the disciples just springing like flies, hiding, cowering behind Him? And that man runs right to Jesus and hits the ground, takes the knee, and I can imagine Jesus looking at him with great compassion. He just calmed a storm. This is one guy. And His disciples are peeking around the corners realizing this is exactly what I thought these people would be like. This is an entire waste of time. We almost died. I can never get this twenty-four hours back in my life to get this crazy guy.

Then they heard the man talk to Jesus as if he knew Him. Mark 5:7, “Crying with a loud voice he said, ‘What do we have to do with you, Jesus, son of the most high God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me.’ Jesus said, ‘Come out of that man, you unclean spirit,’” and He literally cast the demon out of that man.

Verse 9, Jesus asks him, “What is your name, demon?” He says, “My name is Legion.” A Roman legion had 6,000 men. Literally, this man was possessed thoroughly. “We are many.” Verse 10, “And he begged Him earnestly not to send him out of the country. Now there was a great herd of pigs feeding on the hillside.” Appropriate. “They begged Him, saying, ‘Send us into the pigs. Let us enter them.’ So He gave them permission, and the unclean spirits came out



of the man, entered the pigs (the herd was numbering about 2,000) and they rushed down the steep bank, into the sea where they drowned. And the herdsmen that saw all of this chaos happen, saw all this running around, falling off the cliff, fled. And I would too.

Crazy. This guy is the number-one social problem of this area. They can't even contain him, so they quarantine him into a tomb. And they try to put fetters and shackles and chains, and they can't even contain him, they can't even control their worst problem. And he's cutting and screaming and all of a sudden Jesus comes over on the boat and he heals and calms the man, their number-one social problem, and all their valued animals start diving in the Sea of Galilee and dying and they just run. Somebody is messing with their whole belief system. Their whole world is getting rocked, and they don't know what to do, and they leave.

And that man is sitting there, clothed, in his right mind, and I can imagine the disciples standing up a little more and taking a little more courage, slowly progressing to this man, and he's changed.

Mark 5:15, they came to see Jesus. They saw the demon-possessed man, the one who had the Legion, sitting, clothed, in his right mind. They were afraid. And those who had seen it described what had happened about the demon-possessed man and the pigs, and you think, oh my goodness, what is their reaction?

Do you think that maybe they'll ask Jesus and say, "Hey Jesus, that was our number-one problem, but we've got a lot of other social problems. Come over here; we've got some projects we need you to clean up; we've got some areas we need you to clean up."

Did they take His social problem to social problem, issue to issue? Did they thank Jesus for His awesome power that solved their number-one social problem? No. They said that when they had told them about the pigs and what had happened to the demon-possessed man, verse 17, they begged Jesus to leave. "Get out of here. Go. Go. There is something unknown about you. There is something different about you. Go."

And that's the point; the Lord was saying, "It's not your responsibility for results. Your responsibility is to share the message of grace and you leave it to Me." And there will be times where tons of people accept Christ, embrace what you're saying, but there will be times where people want to kick you out of their city. I've been there, where people hear the message of Christ and their heart is so burdened, they just verbally and emotionally and physically push you away.

"The Lord says that's not the point, guys. You leave the results to me. Just share the message of grace." And the disciples are like, "Leave? My rabbi just healed your number-one social problem and you want me to leave? Well, good riddance on you. We're not going to risk our lives again. All this happened, we changed this guy, and you want us to leave?"

And Jesus said, "Guys, hold on, hold on. Fine. We'll go." And they turn around and they start walking off the boat. Can you imagine the disciples' reaction? Fine with you. Make note of this,

Philip, you're the analytical one. We do not go to the Decapolis again. We can use our resources more efficiently and reach more people than this one guy. Can you hear that logic?

And Jesus says, "Fine, we'll go," and all of a sudden their conversation is stopped by the voice of one man. Mark 5:18, when He was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed by the demon begged Jesus, "Can I go with you? Can I be with you? I have no love lost here. Nobody gave me hope here. I was their problem. No one, nothing they could do would save me here. No one showed me love. No one showed me grace. No one showed me mercy. I was such a deep, dark problem, they didn't even know what to do with me until you came and saw my soul and saw that I was in need of help and you gave me the message of grace and you saved me."

And what a testimony of a changed heart, a heart that says, "I don't know a lot, but I just want to be around the one that changed my heart." Paul says in Philippians 3, "Not that I have attained or am already perfect, but I'm striving to lay hold of what got hold of me." I just want to be near the one that showed me grace. "Can I go with you?"

You can imagine the disciples' spirits humbled by that. I can imagine the disciples saying, "Sure. I guess we have room for one." But then Jesus interrupts them. Mark 5:18, as He was getting into the boat, the man that was possessed begged to come with Jesus. Verse 19, but Jesus said, "No." "God, can I come with you?" "No. You cannot come with me." "Lord, Lord, it's dark here. Let's bring him over to the spiritually rich side. Come on."

"No. Guys, have I not been teaching you all along that it is our responsibility to share the message of grace to whoever will listen, and that God can give a testimony and get power and a great example of us sharing a testimony of grace with this guy. Now I want to show you how powerful the testimony of grace can be." He turned to that man and said, "You cannot come, but listen to me."

And listen to this verse, Mark 5:19, "But I say unto you, go home. Go home. I want you to go home and I want you to tell your friends how much the Lord has done for you and how He has had mercy on you. Go home. Just go home. I know you've only been saved for ten minutes. Just go home. Tell all your friends how much the Lord has done for you and how He's had mercy on you. Just go home and tell your friends how much the Lord has done for you and how He has had the mercy on your. God can use that testimony."

And He gets in the boat and He rides away. The guy's life hasn't been saved ten minutes and he's standing on shore and he says, "What am I supposed to do? I'm not a pastor. I'm not a theologian. My life was just changed. I'm going to a deep, dark community that ostracized me. But the who changed my life just simply said I must be an agent of grace, so I'm just going to go home. I'm going to tell my friends how much the Lord has done for me and how he has had mercy on me."

So His disciples go back to the Jewish area; they have these great miracles; they have the feeding of the five thousand; they have all these wonderful Sabbath events and people are thronging to Jesus. And then a few months later He said, "Guys, I want to go back over to the other side for a second time. I want to take you and go over there."

And they are like, “Hold on, Jesus, wait a second. Do you remember the first time we went over there? We met this guy; he was possessed and he was cutting himself and screaming in the tombs. He was shouting and crazy and we didn’t even get five feet off the shore and we just left; they kicked us out. Their pigs were running all around. We are not going to go over there. Is it worth it?”

And Jesus says, “When I change a life of one man, one man can change his world. And all the responsibility is to go there and to share the message of grace.” So He said, “Guys, let’s get in the boat and go to the other side.”

And Mark 7, for the second time, the verse we began with, Mark 7:31. Then He returned a second time from the region of Tyre, through Sidon, to the Sea of Galilee, to the region of Decapolis, and when they touched down the second time, they brought him a man who was deaf, impediment of speech; he begged Him to lay hands on him, but there were so many people thronging for the grace of God that Jesus had to take them away from the crowds.

That guy was an agent of grace. That guy took the truth of Christ and said, “I’m not a pastor. I’m not a theologian. All I know is once I was blind, now I see, and I’m just going to go home and I’m going to tell all my friends, whoever will listen, of how much the Lord has done for me and how He has had mercy on me.”

And this man published it abroad, and the feeding of the four thousand, the feeding of the four thousand was sparked by the testimony of one man. One man who experienced life change and was willing to be an agent of grace.

And all of these miracles and all of these healings, the disciples had to be dragged to experience that. It’s worth it to share grace to one man. Jesus says, “Guys, my disciples, it is not your responsibility, the results. Your responsibility is to share the message of grace and be an agent of grace, and you step aside and watch the mighty power of God that is mighty to save.”

You can be that agent of grace. You can be that agent of grace. Think of a name. Think of that name. Are they too dark, are they too gone? Are they too lost in your mind? They are not. Maybe you’re that man, maybe you feel of yourself that you are so far gone, God’s grace can save you today.

Jesus words to that man are the same words to you and me: believer, go home. Go home and tell your friends how much the Lord has done for you and how He has had mercy on you. Go home. Go home. Tell your friends what the Lord has done for you and how He’s had mercy on you. Be that agent of grace; share grace.

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