

## Mark 1:29–39

<sup>29</sup>As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. <sup>30</sup>Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. <sup>31</sup>He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

<sup>32</sup>That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. <sup>33</sup>And the whole city was gathered around the door. <sup>34</sup>And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him. <sup>35</sup>In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. <sup>36</sup>And Simon and his companions hunted for him. <sup>37</sup>When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." <sup>38</sup>He answered, "Let us go on to the neighbouring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." <sup>39</sup>And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

"Everyone is searching for you." Said the companions of Jesus.

What is it you are searching for? Where is it you are looking? Are you expecting to find it or do you see it as a pointless exercise you feel compelled to pursue?

I, obviously, do not know how you have answered those questions or even if you have. At this time you probably haven't you read them and moved on to see what else I have written.

We are often so impatient as people that we want to move on, to achieve things, to be doing and completing as much as possible. There are some who want to know the end to the book before they have really got into it; to know the murderer almost before the crime has been committed.

Later this year I will be having a Sabbatical, a time to step aside from the daily things of Circuit ministry "for the purpose of pursuing and approved programme of study, research, work or experience." It is a time to "retrain, refresh and renew the very base from which future activity may spring." I quote from the Methodist Conference Agenda of 1985.

It is a time to prepare for future activity. Jesus took time out on a regular basis to be with his heavenly Father that prepared him for his next time of activity. Jesus, <sup>35</sup>In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed.

The intention in my Sabbatical comes in two parts, one is practical and will be looking at how an organisation can look at its Carbon Footprint and seek to make a difference to it, and secondly I will be looking at using open spaces as a place for spiritual refreshment and renewal through being still and reflective rather than being on the go and active all the time.

When the bible speaks of Jesus healing people we need to think about what it meant in the time of Jesus "*Today in the 21st century, with our focus on physical cure, people find it difficult to grasp what healing meant in the first century. The word translated as 'cure' in [v. 34](#) is *therapeuo*, which has obvious links to our own word 'therapy', and in New Testament times meant 'serve' and 'heal' just as much as 'cure'. Jesus' power to heal is, in the broadest sense, therapeutic: he enables people to find renewed ways of living through proclaiming the message in the way he himself lives.*" (Rev Caroline Wickens)

As Christians our proclaimed message can so often be "you need to be busy doing" Jesus invites us "to be"; He who speaks of himself with the words "I am" calls us "To Be".

What are you searching for, another thing to do or a new way to be? In the "being" there will be "doing" but it should be purposeful doing and not just doing for the sake of "busy-ness".