

Gospel Texts for Life Sunday - Series B

Epiphany 7

Text: *Mark 2:1-12*

Focus: *We see in this account how Jesus values each individual. He shows us that he is most concerned about a person's spiritual well-being. Yet caring for physical needs can provide opportunities for strengthening faith.*

Theme: *The dual role of Jesus' love*

I. *Jesus cares for the soul first*

- Jesus responded to the persistent faith of the group.
- His forgiveness was directed to the individual.
- The soul is more important to Him than his disabled body.
- Jesus proclaims the gospel to all the world, yet He personally promises forgiveness to each individual.
- Imitate Christ's love when you meet individuals; care for the soul first (first in importance, not necessarily first in time).

II. *Jesus heals the body, too*

- He loves and cares for the individual in his body, too.
- Healing of the body is proof of Christ's divinity as well as His authority to forgive sins.
- When we care for an individual's physical welfare, it earns credibility for the love we're showing for their souls.
- When we care for the souls of others, let's not ignore their earthly needs; food, shelter, transportation, or just a listening ear.
- People have big problems, and they'll listen to the ultimate Gospel solution when we show concern for them in their struggles.

Easter 4

Text: *John 10:11-18*

Focus: *Life is filled with worries, fears, and concerns, especially toward the end of our lives. We worry about caring for our elderly loved ones, about the final years and days of our lives, and about our children and grandchildren after our death. But our Good Shepherd holds us safely in His hands. Jesus has passed through death for us and lovingly cares for us throughout our lives even to the hour of our death.*

Theme: *Rest in Your Shepherd's Hands*

I. *They're powerful hands*

- a. Jesus has authority over life.
- b. He is the author of life (Acts 3:15; John 1:3).
- c. Thus he controls all life, including His own.
- d. But we don't share that authority; He decides when our life ends, not we ourselves, in spite of the current trends in society.

II. *They're loving hands*

- a. Jesus uses His authority over life to bless His sheep.

- b. He stretched out His hands on a cross for us!
- c. Since Jesus loved us enough to die for us and guarantee our place in heaven, we can also trust Him to deal lovingly with us at the end of life.
- d. Whether we die young or old, suddenly or after months of suffering, our dear Shepherd will care for us and take us home in the exact right time.
- e. We make decisions in keeping with God's will for us and place ourselves into His loving hands.