

Ruth asked me to reflect on these healing stories in Mark 1.

I said Yes, I would think on them....and I did....

this is Pastor Ruth's message! I am only here to '**BARE** witness'

Much of my life has been dedicated to the "healing business"

... growing out of my role in Pastoral Care in a psychiatric hospital setting,

and continuing in pastoral care and counseling,

here and in Japan,

and finally as a "teacher" to others

in the work of pastoral care in the General Medical setting..

And, yes, these stories in Mark, are wonderful, inspiring evidence that God/ through Jesus,

is on the side of healing and hope.

We share them to say that the **Holy One "cares"**

about our daily life,

our spiritual and mental states,

and our relationships!

God is on the side of "**healing**" **our spirits**,

our **bodies** and our **social interactions**.

*One of my first teachers of pastoral care was Ernest Bruder,
who frequently said,*

"The mentally ill are just like us....only more so!"

At that time it seemed like a very radical thought.

But as time continues we learn more and more

about the connection of "unclean spirits"

with our physical bodies

and our relationships.

some 30+ years ago we developed a program called :
*"Recovery of Hope", a program for **healing** troubled marriages....*

These stories in Mark's Gospel,

written long ago,

do speak to me today

about the state of my "*spiritual self*",

that part of me that **struggles** with an awareness of my **mortality**,

the limits of my "**TIME**",

the decline of my **mental functioning**,

the increasing **aches of my joints**,

an awareness of a **declining intellectual** capacity,

trouble **focusing** on important tasks,

small samples of **arthritis**,

a **loss of energy**,

a decline of my **hearing**.

So ***is*** there some "healing" **that can come to this time of life?**

Is there a "**balm**" for a "**wounded spirit**"
that I can find for ***my*** life?

Was this written to **bring hope to** those of us at the declining stages of our lives?

or to *any of us who can* ***no longer expect our bodies to be "healed"***?
is that called "FAITH?"

I HOPE SO!!!

From Richard Rohr comes this thought:

*“As disappointed as I get with early stage religion, I can't give up on it, because religion still has the power to communicate to you that **you are a participant in something bigger than yourself--and from the inside out.** We call it the **discovery of the soul** or the **awakening of the spirit.** “*

Richard Rohr

Could healing include the decline of the body &

*the increase of the “spiritual?”
the “Divine Spirit”?*

The Eternal PRESENCE?

I hope it means that God is with us whether suffering or not,

“God is with us, “living or dying”

God is with us!

“Suffering or serving”

God is with us!

Doing or being,

God is with us

.....if we keep our hearts and minds open to the work of ‘**God’s spirit**’ in us,

that is the work of **love**,

the work of **compassion** for **all life** and **persons**.

and then finally, the **“resolution”** of life

when the SPIRIT *consumes* all

.....comes

then...

spirit-in-oneness !

A time for “Amen” to life.

Bob Carlson 2/8/15