The telephone rings. I'd like to speak to Mr. Schelesman.

Speaking.

I am calling on behalf of Bread for the world – the Cleveland Orchestra – the Fraternal Order of Police – Wartburg Seminary - you fill in the blank. A worthy cause asking for help. And every time I say yes and write out a check? I get more calls. More worthy causes. More people to help.

For many of you it is I on the other end of the phoneline – asking. You have said Yes to me one time – or two or twenty and I am asking for a little more help – another job you can do.

Or it is a mother or daughter or friend who is facing a tough time. Your phone rings, and you hear the same complaining – the same fears, the same anxiety as you talk day after day. The more you listen – the more you really care the more that phone rings. Like waiting on the little child who wants a drink at bedtime, one drink, then another, then another and another, you give and give and give until there is no more you give up in exasperation.

From there Jesus set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there.

Jesus had been healing the sick and everywhere he went they brought to him more who were sick. Mark tells us that wherever Jesus went in villages or cities or farms they laid the sick in the marketplaces and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak and all that touched it were healed.

Now you would think that would have brought forth a great chorus of praise to God but it only brought forth the criticism of the religious leaders and more requests for help. So Jesus went to a foreign land, to Tyre, and tried to hide out – he did not want anyone to know he was there.

But there was no rest for Jesus. A woman found him – she was a pagan – she did not worship the God of Israel. But she had heard about Jesus. Now in that world where women would never approach men who were not related to them, she came into the house where Jesus was and was so bold as to approach him and bow down at his
She begged Jesus to cast the demon out of her daughter. Jesus said to her, Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the pet dogs.

Can you imagine someone doing that? Feeding the pets while the children go hungry. Jesus was already exhausted – there was no end to the people who wanted his help in Israel. Let’s take care of our own first.

You and I have heard it expressed so many times – there are people in need here, in Avon Lake, or here in Lorain County, or here, in Northeast Ohio – let’s take care of them first – they we will start helping others. I will feed the Jewish people first – when they are satisfied then maybe there is be some help for the Gentiles.

But the woman said, Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs.

For saying that, Jesus said, you may go, the demon has left your daughter. So she went home and found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

Sometimes I forget that Jesus is human. I forget that he needed 8 hours of sleep, and calories to feed the cells of his body. I forget the human eyes that saw the people lined up one after another and the human mind that realized that the more healings he did the more the people demanded. I tell myself that helping was easy for Jesus – he is God – but that helping is costly me.

But Mark tells us that love is costly for Jesus – every time he tried to get away the crowds followed. There was simply no way to limit what people wanted from him. Jesus gave – even to the point of giving his life – Jesus gave.

I like to go to bed at night feeling good about myself. I like to feel that what I needed to do was accomplished - that the love I needed to show I showed – that I shared with those God wants me to share – that I cared for those God wants me to care. One way I sleep well at night is to build some fences. These are the people I will care for, my children, my relatives, the members of my church. Let someone else care for all the rest. Jesus tried that – this woman who had no claim on Jesus but her daughter’s need – tore his fences down. Jesus let her have her way with him.
As long as my peace of mind is more important than my neighbor's need, then I will have to build some fences to keep some neighbors out of sight and out of mind. Maybe you do the same. But Mark wants you to know that Jesus does not. Mark never tells a story of someone reaching out a hand to Jesus that Jesus did not fill.

But there was never enough of Jesus to go around, never a night when Jesus could go to bed and sleep peacefully knowing that his work was done. As long as this world is the way this world is there will never be a day like that for Jesus and his people. Never until that new age has come will Jesus be at rest.

Paul hints at this when he tells us that Christ must reign until he puts all enemies under his feet – the last enemy to be destroyed is death.

Yes, when the kingdom Jesus has won through his death and resurrection has come there will be peace in every heart but as long as children are orphaned when their parents die of aids and neighborhoods are ruled by violence through the hours of darkness, and death stalks those who are weakened by disease – as long as anyone suffers in this whole world, Jesus will not rest. He sends his body to join the battle – to love and give and sacrifice that there might be healing and thanks and feasting and hope. He sends you.