

Christ's Incomparable Authority (Mark 1:21-34)

I. Jesus' Supreme Speech (Mark 1:21-28)

- A. Jesus' Activity: Preaching in the Synagogue (Mark 1:21-22)
 - Upon traveling to the city of Capernaum, Jesus and his disciples enter the synagogue where Jesus begins to preach
 - Jesus' sermon, which would have no doubt included the subject of the inauguration of God's Kingdom described in Mark 1:14-15), appears at first glance to be fairly common and familiar.

- B. The Crowd's Response: Amazement
 - Despite the familiar appearance, the crowd was amazed (literally "thunderstruck") by the authority with which Christ taught
 - This response to Jesus' teaching & actions can be seen throughout Mark (Mark 6:2, 10:24-26, 5:20, 4:41, etc)

- C. Jesus' Activity: Driving out a Demon (Mark 1:23-27)
 - While preaching, Jesus is interrupted by a man indwelt by an "unclean spirit."
 - The unclean spirit declares he has no business with Christ, that he understands the mission of Christ (to destroy all demons) and that he understands Christ's true identity ("the Holy One of God")
 - The words of the demon clearly communicate the divine nature of Jesus Christ
 - In response to the demon, Jesus (again with complete authority), simply speaks to the demon demanding that he leave the man and be silent.
 - The command to be silent is a command given by Christ on a number of occasions and is believed by some to be an attempt by Christ to distance himself from a demonic witness & to avoid any unwanted attention from Roman Officials who might accuse Christ of calling for a political revolution.

- D. The Crowd's Response: Amazement
 - Yet again, the crowd is utterly amazed by Christ's authority.

Side Discussion: The authority of Christ's spoken word...(Genesis 1-2, Psalm 19, etc)

- Although Christ's authoritative word was foreign to the crowds of Mark 1, its power is by no means foreign to those familiar with the Old Testament. Throughout the Old Testament we are given numerous examples of the absolute authority of God's spoken word. The greatest of these examples can be seen in the story of Creation where God speaks everything into existence.
- By speaking with this level of authority, Jesus was both showing that he was (as the demon professed) the Son of God, and that the Kingdom he had declared was a Kingdom in which the Creator, again, exerts absolute authority over all things.

II. Jesus' Healing Touch (Mark 1:21-28)

A. Christ's Activity: Healing

- After the account detailing Christ's activity in the synagogue, Jesus and his disciples travel to the nearby home of Peter where they find Peter's mother-in-law sick with a fever. Jesus immediately heals the woman.
 - Later that same day multitudes begin showing up at the house to be healed of various diseases and demon-possession.

B. Jesus' Means of Healing: Touch/Personal Interaction

- Yet again, the awe-inspiring nature of Christ's actions is not simply found in the fact that Jesus was able to heal, but in the manner that he chose to heal.
- In this instance, like in many others, Jesus chooses to heal with his physical touch. Similar instances can be found in Mark 1:41, 9:27, 5:39-42, etc.
 - In all of these instances, Christ demonstrates that his authority/rule is not the rule of a distant King, but the authority/rule practiced by a parent lovingly caring for their child.

C. Crowd's Response: Continual Approach

- In response to the clear healing power of Jesus, the crowds (still unaware of exactly who Christ was) continually come before him seeking healing.
 - At no point in time in these accounts are we lead to believe that these individuals are professing faith in Jesus.

Side Discussion: The intimate care of Christ...(Genesis 2:5-8, Psalm 139:5-6, 13-15, etc)

- Although Christ's willingness to physically interact with these people must have been shocking to the audiences in Christ's day, his tender approach was (again) in line with the character of God as revealed throughout the Old Testament.
- Whether it is in the story of Man's creation (where God breathes life into the nostrils of Adam) or in the way that God frequently uses the imagery of marriage to describe his love for Israel, the Old Testament is full of references that speaks of God's tender care that he offers to his people.
 - By choosing to interact with these people in such an intimate manner, Christ was showing himself (again) to be God and showing this the Kingdom he had declared was one in which God would, yet again, directly interact with his people.

III. Personal Response (Conclusion)

Tragically, the crowds depicted in Mark 1 did not appear to respond with any level of faith in Christ. As we read these stories today, then, we must be careful to walk away with more than just a sense of awe for Christ's authority.

A. Unbelievers:

- Be amazed by the absolute authority/power of Christ

- Repent & Believe in the Gospel
- B. Believers:
- Be amazed by the authority of your King
 - Be comforted by the fact that Christ still reigns today
 - Be confident to approach him daily with all concerns knowing he loves you and is able to do whatever he wills...