

# Mark 1:21-34

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] of the sermon because they like to put it online so that you can go back and find it. and they're always like, surely we're in the second chapter by now. Well, not quite. We're not even going to make it out of the first chapter this morning.

But we're in Mark chapter 1, starting in verse 21 and going to verse 34. And again, that repeated word that we keep hearing this morning, and I had no idea what song Miss Tricia was singing. Last week, we looked at the proclamation of the kingdom. This week, we're looking at the power of the kingdom. So let's all stand. If you're physically able and desire to do so, would you stand with me as we read the word of God found in the gospel of Mark chapter 1, starting in verse 1. We'll read down to verse 34.

And they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath, he entered the synagogue and began to teach. They were amazed at his teaching. Now that's Jesus. For he was teaching them as one having authority and not as the scribes.

Just then, there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, saying, What business do we have with each other, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us?

[ 1 : 1 2 ] I know who you are, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Be quiet and come out of him. Throwing him into convulsions, the unclean spirit cried out with a loud voice and came out of him.

They were all amazed, so that they debated among themselves, saying, What is this? A new teaching with authority. He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.

Immediately, the news about him spread everywhere into all the surrounding district of Galilee. And immediately after they came out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew with James and John.

Now Simon's mother-in-law was lying sick with a fever. And immediately they spoke to Jesus about her. And he came to her and raised her up, taking her by the hand. And the fever left her, and she waited on them.

When evening came, after the sun had set, they began bringing to him all who were ill and those who were demon-possessed. And the whole city had gathered at the door. And he healed many who were ill with various diseases, and cast out many demons.

[ 2 : 1 5 ] And he was not permitting the demons to speak, because they knew who he was. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you so much for this day. What a grand privilege it has been to be together.

But even now, what a greater opportunity we have to see and hear the word of God. So we pray, O God, that you would speak to us through your word. Open our hearts. Open our minds.

May we be receptive of it, not just to gain information, but may our lives be transformed through the truth that it proclaims to us. And may you be glorified through it.

We ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. You may be seated. The power of the kingdom. Mark chapter 1, verses 21 through 34.

If you remember in the verses which precede this, Jesus began his public ministry. And he has begun his public ministry with the proclamation that the kingdom of heaven is here.

[ 3 : 1 5 ] John the Baptist had come with the proclamation that the kingdom of heaven was near. It was getting closer. But when Jesus steps on the scene after John had been imprisoned, which we find the fuller accounts of it in the other gospel records.

But once John has been imprisoned, Jesus begins his public ministry and says the kingdom of heaven is here. And everything changes at that moment. The kingdom became present because the king was there.

Wherever the king is, there is the kingdom. And we saw the proclamation of it. And now we begin to see the power of that kingdom. That the kingdom comes with authoritative power.

Power that is beyond comprehension. Power that at times is astonishing to observe. Power that is just as full today as it has been at any other time of history.

And it is a power that can be known and experienced. But it is a power that must be taken in its proper context. And we see from the scripture before us.

[ 4 : 19 ] That as he left the region that he was in around the Sea of Galilee. And went into Capernaum. Which is one of the major hubs there. And this will become his home base in that Galilean region.

He goes into Capernaum and it says, And on the Sabbath, immediately on the Sabbath, He entered the synagogue and began to teach. Now this was customary because the priests were confined to the temple.

But the synagogues around the region. If you just want to see the sovereignty of God. And you want to understand what the scripture says. That in the fullness of time, God brought forth his son.

That is at the right time. One of the institutions that we see that is prevalent in the day of Christ. And in the days following Christ. Is the reality of the synagogue. Now the synagogue came about because of the Babylonian captivity.

Because in Babylonian captivity, the nation of Israel was dispersed among the Babylonian Empire. Which later became the Roman Empire. I know we have to transgress a lot of history before we get to that. But we're not trying to fill in every gap just for the sake of time.

[ 5 : 17 ] But eventually it's absorbed into the Roman Empire. And so the Jewish people to maintain some form of their identity. Because not every one of them went back to the land of Israel. You should gather that because you read your Old Testament.

And you know that when Cyrus issued a decree that whoever will can go back. That only a small remnant went back. By the way, my friend, I know this is a preaching time. But this is also a good teaching time.

This is why our Old Testaments are important. And so when you understand that they all say that. You say, well I wish they would have all went back. Well then we wouldn't have had the introduction of the synagogue. That is, these remote places to maintain Jewish identities in foreign lands. Now that was very important. Because when Christ showed up on the scene. They didn't have priests that were standing up teaching. They would have elders inside. Now that being older individuals.

Who would come and teach at the synagogue. And if you were a visiting male to that region. Then you had the opportunity by way of invitation to teach before them.

[ 6 : 18 ] Jesus does it on multiple occasions. But there's also a man named Paul who does that. Which leads to the spread of the gospel. So God understands what he's doing.

Even in the introduction of the synagogues among the nations. Jesus utilizes this. And this is how he introduces his ministry before the people.

He is there. And it says that he began to teach. I love the teaching of Christ. And we love the understanding of this. But it is here that we begin to see the power of Christ. Now before we go any further.

I want you to understand. You can never separate the work of God from the word of God. That is his authoritative power is connected to his teaching and his declaration.

And if you want to experience the work of God. Then you must be in the word of God. And if you are in the word of God. Then you without a doubt will begin to observe the work of God.

[ 7 : 24 ] Why? Because the work of God and the word of God go hand in hand. The power of the kingdom is fulfilled and contained in the proclamation of the king.

As he teaches and as he sees those things. And we will see it here in just a moment. And we will see his authority is connected. And the power is on display when he goes into a public place and begins to teach.

And in that teaching we begin to see the power of the kingdom. The first thing I want you to notice is that the kingdom has the authority to confront.

The kingdom has the authority to confront. Now there's application to us in this. So don't lose me as we make our way through it.

It says that he was in Capernaum and he went into the synagogue and began to teach. And they were amazed at his teaching. For he was teaching them as one having authority and not as scribes. [ 8 : 27 ] Now what does that mean? He was standing up and authoritatively declaring the word of God. Rather than teaching the way the scribes would teach. How would the scribes teach in those days?

Well the scribes who were the experts in the law or the Old Testament. Who made it their job. And it was their job to hand copy the law. And we must thank God for the work of the scribes and the Pharisees.

And we must praise him even though they did not necessarily accept the truth. We must thank him for their labors. But those scribes who would teach their teaching was really reflective of just repeating what somebody else had said.

And they were constantly declaring well so and so says this and so and so says this and so and so says this. And they were just repeating what had already been declared by another. Jesus stands up and begins to proclaim the word of God.

And he doesn't need to use a source because listen he is the source. For the word became flesh and dwelt among us. And he doesn't need anyone to define the word for him for he is the source. [ 9 : 32 ] And this is why I want to give you confidence and comfort here. Listen brothers and sisters, friends. When you open up the scripture there are helps that are helpful. But the greatest commentary on scripture is scripture.

If you want to know what the word of God says read the word of God. Now there are helps. There are things that we can come to. There are things that we can dive into.

There are some good ones. There are some not so good ones. But the greatest commentary on scripture is scripture. Let the word of God declare to you. And the word promises us that he will give us eyes to see and ears to hear and minds to understand.

You say well pastor the word is so deep. You're right it is. I told you this is my 19th year in the ministry. I don't know how many times I've read scripture cover to cover. I don't know how many times I've read it.

Every year I read the New Testament through at least twice. The Old Testament through once. Every year I've been doing it for a number of years. I don't say that boastfully. I say that humbly. Because every year as I'm reading it I go wow I've never seen that before.

[ 10 : 35 ] I didn't know that was there. I never noticed that before. But it is not me who is all of a sudden understanding. It is the spirit that is giving me an illumination into his own word. Because this is one of the roles of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit comes that you may be able to call to mind what Jesus has declared. There is authoritative power in the word. And part of that authority is that it can confront that which controls us.

Look at what it says. It is. It's a wording there. And I don't know how many times I've read this passage. And this is one of those that I missed before until this past week. And I said well it's right there.

Look at what it says. They were amazed at his teaching. Look at verse 23. Just then there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit and he cried out. You see it?

He said oh yes there's a man with an unclean spirit. He cries out. But where was the man with the unclean spirit? In their synagogue. You know what's astounding is here we have a man that is filled with an unclean spirit.

[ 11 : 39 ] It's another way of saying being demon possessed. And this man that is filled with an unclean spirit is in their synagogue. We don't know how long he had been in their synagogue.

But he had made it his habitual practice to attend the meeting of the synagogue where scribes would stand up and teach what the word of God has declared. And as far as we can tell from scripture week in and week out when someone stands up and declares this is what the word teaches.

This so and so says this. So and so says that. This man went about his normal business each and every day being filled with an unclean spirit. Being filled with an unclean spirit over and over and over again.

He was going through the motions. Friend listen. He was a good Jewish individual. He was going to the synagogue. He was going to work. He was attending everything that he ought to attend.

And the whole time while he was in the synagogue. Because you can get kicked out of the synagogue. Because people whose eyes were opened on the Sabbath got kicked out of the synagogue.

[ 12 : 43 ] But the man who is filled with an unclean spirit is allowed to be in the synagogue. Why? Because he looked all right to us. Now this ought to begin speaking to you just a little bit.

It is quite possible to be in the right place. But not know the right power. It is quite possible to be in the right place.

And still be controlled by something else. That's a good way of saying just because you're sitting in the pew doesn't mean you know the Savior.

And it's not the place that has the power to confront that. But you notice there was a day where this man who was in the synagogue.

And on that day someone stood up and taught. And the one who stood up and taught was a man who taught with authority. And it was the man Jesus Christ himself. And at the very teaching of this man.

[ 13 : 43 ] Now did Jesus call this man out? No. What confronted the unclean spirit? It was the word of God. The word of God preached to his heart.

The word of God pricked his heart. The word of God offended the unclean spirit. Do you want to know how to help the unsaved? Do you want to know those who have problems? Do we want to know what is needed most in our pulpits today?

It is not greater personalities. It is not greater performances. As much as I love the choir and the musicians and the song. And I looked up there this morning and said oh it's full. It's not greater performances.

It's not greater buildings. It's the more authoritative power of the word of God. You can go watch a show. You can be moved by people. But it is not the place that you are at.

But it is the word that you hear that confronts the thing that overwhelms you. Do you notice? The kingdom alone has the authority to confront it.

[ 14 : 44 ] You can be around the right people. You can even be in the right place. You say pastor how can you say that? Because I did it. Because I did it.

I was there. I was in the right place. I was in the pews. I was in the group. I was in with the people. But then there were those times where I got in the word of God.

And all of a sudden the word of God began to confront what was in me. The kingdom power is the power to confront.

And then immediately this man cried out. You see what he says there. He says he cries out what business do we have with each other?

Jesus of Nazareth have you come to destroy us? I know who you are the Holy One of God. There is this repeated refrain throughout the Gospel of Mark. Not only does he use the word immediately all the time.

[ 15 : 42 ] But there is also this declaration of who Jesus is. He is the Son of God. He is introduced so in the very first verses. He is acknowledged so by the Roman centurion who is at the foot of the cross.

It says surely this is the Son of God. The demons continue to profess over and over and over again who he is. We notice it over and over again. There is this declaration that he is the Son of God.

Now some people refer to what they call the Messianic secret. If you ever hear people talk about the Messianic secret. Tell them they are talking about a bunch of baloney. Because the Messianic secret they say. Oh Jesus never acknowledged himself as the Son of God.

Now that is not true. We can get to that later. They say because he told anybody that declared him that he was the Son of God to be quiet. No. He only told the demons that said he was the Son of God to be quiet. Because he doesn't need the testimony of demons.

When Peter acknowledged it he said okay. And this is why we also find in the book of James that even the demons believe and tremble. We also notice here that he has the ability to confront.

[ 16 : 44 ] Because the demons acknowledge. What do we have to do with you? What to you and what to us? So we notice the power of the kingdom.

It has the authority to confront. Number two. It has the authority to control. It is one thing to call out that which is controlling us. It is a whole other thing to control that which controls us.

When this man cries out it is not the man that is speaking. It is the unclean spirit or the demon that is speaking through him. Now I know some of you in your mind think that we're going a little bit too far here.

But do a quick word study. And every time you go through the gospels you cannot escape the reality that Jesus dealt with individuals that were demon possessed. And the demons are always speaking.

And in case you think that it's something that is confined to antiquity. That it is no longer present then I would say you have not walked in darkest moments yet. And I don't mean to get too crazy on you.

[ 17 : 45 ] But I've experienced it and I've seen it. I've had individuals look at me and tell me that they think they're God. I've had people tell me that they were going to kill me. I've had people tell me one thing at one moment and the very next moment changed completely.

I've seen things that would make me astounded and make me scratch my mind. If I did not open them up in scripture you say well pastor maybe you were going crazy. Maybe I was but maybe I was just seeing biblical reality. Too many times we try to define as abnormal that which the scripture says is demonic.

So we take it in its simplicity and we take it in its clearness. The scripture is not trying to trick us. It is trying to clearly state a reality that we must acknowledge. That we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against what?

The powers and principalities of the air and the spiritual forces of darkness. And too many times those spiritual forces of darkness control those around us.

Sometimes the battle we are facing is not a battle of someone's will. But a battle of one that is controlling that person. Because when this man cries out. It is the demon that is speaking through him.

[ 18 : 53 ] It is not the man. Let's bring it down this way. Sometimes the reason we can't get over that thing which controls us is because we believe that thing is only a physical reality.

When really we are being controlled by a spiritual reality. You say pastor are you saying I'm demon possessed? No I'm just saying that you are susceptible to influences.

He says no I'm not. Well what makes this man any different than anybody else? There is a spiritual world in which we ought to acknowledge.

And we ought to know that sometimes I would love to get over this. And oh I wish I could get over this one thing. Or I wish. Maybe we ought to turn it to the one who has the authority to control that which controls us.

Maybe we ought to surrender the working at it and give it to the one who can speak to it. What does it say? And Jesus said to him be quiet and come out of him.

[ 20 : 01 ] This man who was overcome by this unclean spirit. What happened? Now the spirit made loud utterance but he didn't say a word. Why? Because he was told to be quiet. And then what does the scripture say?

And it came out of him. That which was controlling the man was controlled by the Savior. The reality that we must come to is the thing that controls us.

The thing that we cannot overcome on our own ability. The thing that we have no strength over. The thing that is stronger than us is not stronger than the one seeking to redeem us. It is the one thing that we must surrender to him and say Lord I can't do it.

It is the beautiful reality of that song I surrender all. Because on our own we can't do it. And we need to come and we need to say yes Lord I lay it at your feet.

He has the authority to control and the spirit had to leave the man. And it says and then as he was there after. We will get to Peter's mother-in-law in just a moment. But as he's there and people are coming and people are coming after the sun went down.

[ 21 : 08 ] Which by the way meant the Sabbath had ended. So people could travel a little bit further. And they could carry their sick loved ones. Because now the legalistic rules of the Sabbath is over. See there's wording and intentionality with scripture.

And Jesus is doing ministry even after dark. And they're bringing everybody to Simon's or Peter's house. And they're bringing everybody over there. Because they hear about this man who has the authority to control.

And it says and he was casting the demons out. But he was not permitting them to speak for they knew who he was. We cannot lose the reality that part of the power of the kingdom. Is that it has control over that which controls us.

It can confront that which fills us. And it controls that which controls us. Paul would say it this way. That which I want to do I do not do. But that which I do not want to do. That is the very thing that I find myself wanting to do. Who will set me free from this desperate wicked man that I am. Now if Paul had to cry out who will set me free.

[ 22 : 11 ] Then who are we to say I can take care of it on my own. But what is Paul. He answers his own question. Who will set me free. But praise be to God through Jesus Christ my Lord and Savior. He says I can't do it.

Because what I want to do I can't do. What I don't want to do I am doing. I'm being controlled by this carnal wicked nature of mine. And I don't know how to set myself free. But praise be to God through Jesus Christ.

There is one who can control that which controls me. Friend as long as you are in control. Then I will tell you you are absolutely out of control. Sometimes you need to lose control.

And give it over to the one who actually has control. He has the authority to confront. The authority to control. And third and finally. He has the authority to conform.

Now we are not declaring conformity to be one that we all look alike. Not uniformity. But to conform us to what we ought to be. The implication from the scripture is.

[ 23 : 16 ] That when this demon. This unclean spirit came out of this man. And we say this implication. Because elsewhere we read in scripture. When Jesus encounters those. Who are filled with an unclean spirit or a demon. It is the same thing that happens there.

That once he controls that. Which was once controlling them. And he casts it out. Then they are. Like everyone else. The demoniacs.

That we will meet. That no one could control. They could not even be bound with chains. For they would always break the chains. And they were living among the tombs. They were the most unclean of unclean. And they had a legion of demons within them.

And Jesus cast them out. And when they found them. They were sitting there in their right mind. Like everyone else. He conformed them to what they ought to be.

He brought them back to the rightful standing that they should have. But the greatest conformity seems to be in verse 29 and following.

[ 24 : 13 ] And immediately after they came out of the synagogue. They came into the house of Simon and Andrews. We're going to go to Peter and Andrews house. And James and John were with them. Now this account is recorded in all three of the synoptic gospels.

But it is only Mark that tells us that James and John is with them. Now Simon's mother-in-law was lying sick with a fever. By the way this is one of the greatest testimonies that we have.

That Peter was married. Also the fact that Paul says is Peter alone worthy of being married. Or can you know Silas and I not get married. So we see this reality here. Simon's mother-in-law was lying sick with a fever.

And immediately they spoke to Jesus about her. And he came to her. And he raised her up. Taking her by the hand. All three synoptic gospels tell us he took her by the hand. And the fever left her. And she waited on them.

He said oh that's so derogatory. Well stay with me. There are two things I want you to see. Two truths that I want you to see from this. The scripture makes it clear that this was not just some passing fever.

[ 25 : 17 ] She was desperately sick. To the point of death. We are told in the other gospels. And at the touch of Christ when he touches her hand and he raises her up.

She gets up and she waits on them. Some of you in your mind say well I'm not waiting on anyone. Now wait just a moment before you don't wait on anyone. Okay. We see first and foremost.

The fullness of the miraculous healing that takes place. Because she who was so near death's door just a moment ago. Now has the awareness and the power and the ability to get up and fulfill her responsibilities that she had already assumed.

So she is fully healed. It's not like she's got to give herself a moment. It's not like she's got to work into it and she doesn't feel like doing it right now but she can do it tomorrow. No. She gets up and immediately she begins to wait on them.

So we see the fullness of the healing. It is Christ with the power to overcome that completely. But we also see the conformity because again when we read scripture we always read it in context. [ 26 : 27 ] Mark's theme. What is Mark's theme? Mark is writing about the suffering servant who came not to be served but to serve and give his life a ransom for many. Mark 10 verse 45.

Mark is writing to us about the suffering servant who is the Savior Jesus Christ. That he did not come that others may serve him but that he being the highly exalted Son of God, King of Kings and Lord of Lords might serve mankind by dying in their place.

He is the suffering servant. And now all of a sudden we find a woman who is touched by the hand of Jesus. And the very next thing we find her doing is serving.

Because he's the suffering servant. He stays up all night serving people that come to him. And then he goes and he prays.

We'll read that later. And from there he goes somewhere else. He's constantly serving. The greatest conformity is this. She was conformed more and more to his image.

[ 27 : 34 ] That the moment Christ healed her and touched her, she became like him and rose to serve those around her. Because conformity to Christ is the most powerful reality that could ever take place in our life.

The closer we get to Christ, who is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, but also is the one who lays aside his garments and ties a towel around his waist and washes the disciples' feet, who also comes not to be served, but to serve and to give his life a ransom.

The greatest conformity is when we become like him. And we are more concerned about seeing who we can serve than we are about seeing who can serve us. Now naturally, naturally, that's not how we're made.

But the authoritative power of the kingdom is it moves us from self-centeredness. You say, oh, Pastor, I'm not self-centered. Well, we all are. We don't have to teach these babies up here that were up here earlier not to be concerned for themselves.

My office is right across the hall from the nursery. Most Sunday mornings, a lot of your precious babies, oh, they're precious and sweet, but they're also in there beating each other up because somebody took somebody's toys.

[ 29 : 01 ] Or they got my goldfish, right? It is a nursery full, now I don't mean this in any disrespect, full of selfish, precious babies.

Because they have to be. And we train them not, we train them to share and to be considerate and to be thankful. We train them and teach them to not be concerned about me, me, me, but others, others, others.

Why? Because naturally, each and every one of us are selfish individuals. The reason the nursery's full of it is because the world's full of it.

But it is the power of the kingdom to move us from self-centeredness to rise and serve and look to others as more important.

Because, see, the kingdom has the power to confront that which overwhelms us, control that which controls us, and conform us more and more to the person of Christ.

[ 30 : 16 ] And that's the power we so desperately need in our lives. Let's pray. Father, we thank you so much for this day. We thank you for the opportunity we've had together, together.

We praise you for your word and pray now that you would allow it to speak its truth into our hearts and minds. Lord, we understand you alone possess all power and authority.

We look to you in our moments of desperation. But, Lord, we also look to you in our moments of goodness. For we know that even our goodness falls woefully short of your holiness.

So Lord, help us to turn it all over to you, looking to you alone to deliver us from that which we cannot deliver ourselves.

We ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen.