

A New Teaching
Mark 1:21-28

Well, amen. We sing to a merciful and mighty God who has revealed Himself to us as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and so it's a blessing we can all come together and unified, sing that, sing that out together.

So we'll be focusing on the Son, obviously, God the Son, this morning, as we return to the book of Mark, and we'll be in verses 21-28 of the first chapter. So as you're getting there, I just want to ask you a question or something for you to consider. At times it's debated; at times it's brought up and reconsidered as times change, as people come and go, as leaders come and go - and the question is, who would you consider, right now, to be the most powerful person in the world? Who would you consider, right now, to be the person with the most authority? So, people go back and forth over this. Some people are pretty up front about it, and say, well, it's the president of the United States, of course, because we live in the great nation of America, and so our leader, then, is, whoever that is at the time... is going to be one that, naturally, has not only power and authority for our nation but even dictating most of the world. Some people look a little elsewhere, and they look at United Nations representatives. They look at European leaders. They look at different aspects of diplomacy and even, maybe, foreign affairs and policy, and how that all works out. Some people look religiously, and they say the Pope. For sure, it's the Pope. You know, he can say something and a lot of people listen. And so, there's this debate that always arises, and it goes back and forth as who is the person with the most authority, the greatest amount of power, right now, in the world?

Well, whoever you have in mind or whoever you first jumped to in your own thinking, I can guarantee you one thing that we can all agree on, that is that whoever that person is, there's some limit to their authority. There's some limit to their power. For some people, it's really... it's a geographical limit. Right? They only have power over a certain city or county or state or nation. Right? There's a geographical limit. It's a people group or something like that or even a certain religion, and that's basically it. There's some limitation, though. Whoever this person is that you have in mind, their jurisdiction, their authority, only goes so far on this earth... doesn't actually swallow up the entire earth, and there's no way that it could, actually, even

expand beyond that. Well, this morning I'd like to point our attention once again to the life of Christ and see His authority, see His power, His dominion, and how it is greater and beyond anything or anyone that has come along or that even is currently ruling or reigning today, and we'll see that in our text.

Before we get into it and read our verses, I just want to remind you... we have the purpose statement in Mark 1:1. "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." Mark writing to give a historical grounding for the gospel. The good news is summed up in the person and the work of Jesus Christ, and that's what Mark says he sets out to do. As he writes to believers in Rome, more than likely, he's giving them the historical grounding for that good news. And so, as we kind of walk through chapter 1, we saw the prophecy of this Messiah as he brought up some Old Testament revelation there from Isaiah. And we saw the preparation for this Messiah as John the Baptist came, and he was out in the wilderness preaching and baptizing people because of their repentance. And then we saw the Messiah revealed as Jesus came and He Himself was baptized - God speaking and affirming from heaven - the Holy Spirit descending like a dove upon Him and clearly revealing this is the One that God has chosen, His Messiah, Jesus. We saw the message that Jesus was bringing summarized in verses 14 and 15 as He came into Galilee. And then the last time we were together, we saw His followers, the following, the initial following that Jesus had gathered about Him; and we saw four people, two sets of brothers. All right. We saw Simon and Andrew, and we saw James and John. Two sets of brothers, all fisherman, dropping their occupation, dropping their job, letting go the nets and following Jesus immediately... immediately. And so, we saw Jesus' authority to call His people, His followers, unto Himself, and now we get to see more of His authority in our passage today.

So, let's look at verses 21-28. "And they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath He entered the synagogue and was teaching. And they were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes. And immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, 'What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God.' But Jesus rebuked him, saying, 'Be silent, and come out of him!' And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying out with a loud voice, came out of him. And they were all amazed, so that they

questioned among themselves, saying, ‘What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him.’ And at once His fame spread everywhere throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee.” So, we have our passage here and the whole scene being set in a synagogue, in a city, the town of Capernaum.

So, to begin our passage in verse 21, we see the entrance; so, specifically, as we’ve already said, the entrance into the synagogue, but even more, kind of zooming out from that, into a town. Now we have a town specified, the town of Capernaum. All we’ve seen so far is regions, really, being referenced. Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist in the southern region of Israel, Judea. Right? Down in Judea, He was baptized there in the Jordan River, and then, we saw Jesus shift and move His ministry up into Galilee and officially begin. Well, Galilee is a region. Right? There’s not a city. There’s not a single... it’s not even just around the Sea of Galilee, it’s the region around. And so, this is all we’ve seen so far. And then, Jesus going alongside the Sea of Galilee, calling these fishermen to Himself.

And now, today, we see a specific town mentioned, Capernaum. So if we’re looking at it on a map, we would find that it’s really on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee there. There’s other cities. There’s other towns. Capernaum is one of them, and it’s also a larger one, because the way it sits, it’s on a route that if you were to be coming from the... kind of the coast of the Mediterranean and making your way up north off the map into Damascus, you’d probably be going through Capernaum. You’d be going right through this portion of Galilee. So it not only sits right there on a route, but also, you really have fishing as an industry, as a business, that’s really taking off, and that’s what we’ve already seen with Jesus calling fishermen to Himself. So this is not just your small tiny town. This is a decent size town. All right?

So that He’s in Capernaum now, specifically, and as we see in our text, they go into the synagogue, and it’s on the Sabbath. So we ask ourselves this question, a synagogue, umm, do we have a record of synagogues in the Old Testament? The last thing I remember in the Old Testament was more things like temples. Right? They had the temple in Jerusalem. Right? And you think, a synagogue, where did this come from? And we’re familiar with this term because we still hear it today, but how did this happen? Went from the Old Testament (no mention of it) to the New Testament, and we now have a

mention of synagogues. Well, here's what's left of some ruins of a synagogue in Capernaum, actually, the actual city that we're looking at in our text, but this synagogue is a fourth century synagogue, so it's not quite the time of Jesus. However, if you were to actually go and look, you could see underneath the foundation of this synagogue; from the side, you would see another foundation with kind of black rock there, and that is the first century synagogue, or the foundation of it, that Jesus was probably in, in our text here as He was preaching.

So, where did these synagogues come from? Well, if you remember the Old Testament history a little bit, there was a time where God punished His people, and He kicked them out of the land, and they went into exile. So when they went into exile, they're away from the temple. They don't have the priestly system. They don't have the sacrifices. They don't have the location, Jerusalem, just to go down to and to worship and to bring their sacrifices. So what do they do? So while they're in Babylon or in Persia or wherever they are in exile, they get together, and they meet wherever they are, in houses, and they start to formulate these places, and they need at least ten people or so, and they get together, and they pray together, and they start to read through what they have of the Old Testament. They read through the Law of Moses, and they read through some of these portions of the prophets, and they kind of spend that time together because it's all they have. They don't have the temple. They can't go down there. So these synagogues start to form, and in fact, there are even, obviously, some in Israel (as they come back there's other synagogues that form all over the region of Israel), but even beyond that, if you remember the book of Acts as we've been through, when Paul is going to different places, and he goes into parts of Europe even, there's synagogues there, and Paul will first go into the synagogue to preach to the people there. So these synagogues were all over the place. Right? And there was just an easy way for the Jewish people that were gathered there to come together to read from Scripture, to read from the Law of Moses, to read from the prophets and to pray together. So this is where these synagogues start forming and coming from, and that's why we have some even here, and Jesus coming into the synagogue in our text.

And notice it says, "...on the Sabbath..." Right? It says, "...on the Sabbath..." So why the Sabbath? Well, this was the normal time that they would come together once a week in the synagogue "...on the Sabbath..." And a normal service was very simple. They would have a reading from the

Law of Moses, right? - one of the first five books, Genesis, Exodus, right? - the first five books of the Old Testament - and then a reading from the prophets, one of the prophets. Then after that, someone would give some type of homily or some type of lecture or sermon of some sort, and they'd pray together. And that was it. So this is what they were at least doing once a week. As they got together in synagogues, they would read not only from the Scriptures, but they would even explain it a little bit and have this time together.

So, with all that in mind, we have Jesus coming in with... it says in our text; "And they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath..." Who's the "they"? It's Jesus and His followers that He's just called. Right? So, He has Simon and Andrew with Him. He has James and John with Him. So they come into the synagogue, and this probably was not a place where Peter or Andrew were strangers. This was probably a place where they lived because Peter's house was, really, nearby as we'll see after this in another text. So they come to this synagogue as they probably did often. They weren't strangers there. But what's unique is Jesus is teaching. Jesus is given the opportunity to teach in this synagogue, and sometimes you need to be invited. Sometimes, if you're new there or traveling through, they'll give you the opportunity to speak. This happened with Paul in the book of Acts, and so, this is potentially what's happening here. Jesus comes into Capernaum. He comes on the Sabbath into the synagogue, and He starts teaching. So this is kind of the more specifics here as we get into His ministry and the account of it as Mark gives us.

So what do we see? We see the expertise that comes forth in Jesus' teaching. Mark tells us a little bit about Jesus' teaching. Verse 22; "And they were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes." So right away, we see a response to His teaching, and it's astonishment. They're astonished at Jesus' teaching, and so we wonder, well, what was He teaching? What was He saying? Well, Mark doesn't give that to us. I mean, there's obviously other accounts that we have in the gospels where we can find, like the Sermon on the Mount and the Olivet Discourse, where you get to see what Jesus was teaching, but here we don't get any of that. We don't get the content. We don't even understand. We don't even know what the passage was that they read from the Law. We don't know. We just know that Jesus was teaching, and we get the response - the response of the people - astonishment! They're astonished at His

teaching, and we get the explanation of why. Why are they astonished? "...for He taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes."

So we start to wonder. There's a difference here. There's a difference between, apparently, how scribes taught and how Jesus taught. And so, we ask ourselves a question again; what's a scribe? Where did they come from? You can think in the Old Testament and you might think of people like Ezra, and go, I think Ezra was a scribe. I think there's some other people in there that were scribes, and maybe the first thing that comes to your mind is someone that's sitting down with manuscripts and just copying. You're just doing the writing. That's all you're doing. It's kind of mindless. You know, you're just sitting there copying the Scripture, so that way the next generation has a copy, and you're making more copies, and that's all it is. That's not really what we have here. That's not what, really, the authors mean when they're talking about scribes. Scribes in this time were a lot more than that. They're really like lawyers or some translations say experts in the Law. That's what they were. They were experts. Not only were they probably having a lot of it memorized because they were copying it down, but they also knew it really well and were the ones that would end up teaching it. So if you had a question about the Law of Moses or some stipulation and how things were to be worked out, you went to the scribes. These were the guys that knew. All right? They knew the loopholes, and they knew how it all worked out. Right? They could tell you everything and give you the details.

So there's a contrast here between those people, the scribes, the experts in the Law, and now, Jesus and how He taught. Apparently, Jesus was different from the way that they taught, and Jesus had authority. So how did the scribes teach? And, if you look back at some of the different texts that are, you know, kind of available to us that are from this time and a little later, you learn that, really, the style of teaching and how the scribes went about teaching, whether it was a synagogue or just explaining some text in the Old Testament, was the impressive nature of name dropping. When they would talk about some portion of Old Testament scripture, they wouldn't simply say this is what this means. They would say, well, Rabbi Rashi says this, and Rabbi Rambaum says this, and they would just cite a bunch of different rabbis, and say and rattle off what they all think. They could just call all these interpretations together. Not only did they know the text and have it memorized, but they could call all these interpretations together and just spit

them out left and right. And that's how the scribes taught. They knew all these interpretations, and it's like you and I, like, knowing all the commentaries and what it says on one passage. Well, this person says this, and this person says this, and that's how the scribes taught, constantly name-dropping and impressing people with their kind of knowledge, if you will.

Well, if you were to look at how Jesus taught... we have some help from other passages in the gospels. For example, the Sermon on the Mount probably rings a bell. Right? If you were to go through Matthew 5-7, right now, and just kind of quickly scan, you'd see how Jesus teaches, and you would see this phrase that continues to, really, like, surface over and over again. And He'll say, "You have heard that it was said ... [this statement] ... But I say to you..." And then again, "You have heard that it was said ... [a statement] ... But I say to you..." And He does this over and over again. And you start to realize how the scribes taught when they were name-dropping and talking about all these different interpretations of men, and then you have Jesus come onto the scene, and He says this is what I say. I don't need to cite anybody. I don't need to backup what I'm saying. I don't need any interpretation of man to verify what I'm saying. It is true, and it's right. It's absolute. It's correct. If Jesus were writing research papers, He wouldn't need footnotes. (That's really nice, actually) He had that luxury. He had that authority. He had that knowledge. He was God in human form. He did not need to backup what He was saying with what man said. He could go straight to God's word, and say this is what it means. Case closed. Finished. He could stand in front of people and read from the prophets of Isaiah, and He could say... He could read a passage describing Himself, and He would say, today, this is fulfilled in your hearing, and it shocked people because He wouldn't have to give some verification, and say that's what so-and-so said, and that's what so-and-so said; He could simply state it as the One who had authority to do so.

So this is the just the beginning of our passage, and already, we see people astonished at Jesus. All right? We haven't even gotten into the event that occurs. All we have is a general description of teaching, and we have a response. People are amazed. They're amazed at this kind of teaching because it totally hit them in a different way. It was a blindside. Every type of scribe and expert taught totally different from how Jesus taught with absolute authority of His own, His own authority. So this was Jesus' teaching, and this was already bringing people to be astonished and

recognize Him as, clearly, One who had authority because He didn't need to name-drop like the scribes did. So this is His expertise in teaching.

Well, we move on, and we see an encounter take place - the encounter that takes place in verses 23 and 24. We read, "And immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, 'What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God.'" So, we learn that "...a man with an unclean spirit..." interrupts. "...a man with an unclean spirit..." interrupts what is taking place in this synagogue, and so, really, this man is demon possessed. And you might say, well, how do we know he's demon possessed? This... my text says, "...an unclean spirit..." Well, we have some help; if you were just to look at another passage in Mark, he makes them synonymous. They're really the same thing. Right? We have this woman who's pleading with Jesus on behalf of her daughter, and she says to Jesus... describing her daughter as having "...an unclean spirit..." But then, later on in the next verse, we see "...the woman was a Gentile, a Syrophenician by birth. And she begged Him to cast the demon out of her daughter." So, when Mark is saying an unclean spirit, he's talking about demon possession. It's a demon. All right? Just to be clear on that.

So that's what's happening here. We have a demon possessed man that interrupts the synagogue, that interrupts what's taking place in this teaching. And notice that he cries out. All right? The interruption is not a subtle one. The interruption is not someone that silently stands up and dismisses themselves to use the restroom of some sort. This is someone crying out. All right? This demon, kind of powerfully screaming, if you will, yelling through this man. And notice what we have. He says, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? ["What have you to do with us...?"] And so, you have this mentioning of us, and you're thinking what's going on here? Because we know, later in the passage, it seems like Jesus just cast out a demon, and you don't have this mention of there being several demons. Well, this demon's really speaking on behalf of all the demons. He's speaking on behalf of the spiritual realm of demonic forces that are working in the world and saying, "What have you [Jesus] to do with us...?" ...him and his whole party of demons, if you will, that are at work in the world.

So immediately, I think, when you read this part of the text, you and I have this temptation to basically distance ourselves from this text because, right

away, we go, demon possession... weird. I've not dealt with that. Right? This is not an every Sunday or growth group occurrence where someone cries out in the middle of the message or the singing. All right? This is not something that is taking place left and right. We're not encountering it that often, and so we start to think this is a tough story. I mean, maybe it happened back then, and I guess, maybe, I can appreciate that Jesus dealt with it. I don't know what else to do with this. Right? Because we think demon possession, and we think this is kind of different.

Well, I want to take this opportunity to take a little bit of time to talk about this whole topic of the spiritual realm because there are unseen forces at work here, and the Bible clearly talks about this. The unfortunate thing is there's a temptation for us and how we respond to it. There's two extremes that we want to avoid. One extreme is to basically say, oh yeah, there's angels and demons but then act like they don't exist at all, and basically, pretend like they're not even there. You just kind of say, yeah, apparently, that's what the Bible says, but I don't know, and you just basically, move on, and you're practically pretending like they don't exist. Well, that's wrong because the Bible clearly tells us that they do exist, and what we should do about it, which we'll get to in second here. Then there's the other extreme where you obsess over it. Right? And all a sudden you're concerned about running into a demon every step you take today. Right? Everywhere you go, you think there's a demon. Every room you enter into, there's a demon. Even if you sing, you think it's a demon's fault, not your fault. That's wrong also. So that's the other extreme. We want to make sure we're careful of these two things: where we completely ignore it, that'd be wrong; or we obsess over it, that'd also be wrong.

So I want to take a few moments just to kind of make sure we get an understanding of how the Bible presents this whole topic to us, so we can understand better how to think about it and then, really, better how to understand our passage that we're looking at right now. So, to bring us back, this struggle has been something that's been going on for a while. All right? This is not something that just surfaced, like, for the first time in Jesus' day. This is something that's been at play for a while. You go back to the fall of mankind in Genesis 3, and you're reminded of how Adam and Eve sinned at this point. And the serpent was there; the serpent did not cause them to sin, but the serpent, who was Satan, was tempting. It was tempting and alluring, this. And then, mankind fell. So in this, we have Jesus, I mean, we have God

addressing the man, Adam, and Eve the woman, and then also, the snake, the serpent who was Satan. And then, here's what God says, "I will put enmity [hostility] between you [serpent or Satan] and the woman [Eve], and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." This first prophecy of a man to come and crush the head of Satan... but in this, notice the enmity that God promises. God states this is how it's going to be. Earth will now become a war zone. This land will now become a battle ground where there'll be the spiritual forces of Satan and his offspring battling against Eve and her offspring. This's what God said. This is how it's going to be. And so, this is how it was from the fall, this understanding of Satan having his way and working in the world.

We jump all the way to the New Testament, and we have verification of this because you kind of start to read, and you're, maybe, familiar with this story and other stories in the gospels, and you've seen the crazy ones. Right? Where you read some of these stories and these people are doing almost supernatural things. They have crazy strength where they're able to break chains, and you think, oh wow, demon possession is, you know, is this... is mainly only that, I guess, and since I don't see that happening around me, it must not be taking place at all. Well, let me remind you of some other ways that the New Testament talks about the spiritual realm and Satan and his work. Is this the only way that Satan works, by possessing people and causing them to do crazy things? Well, if you look at 2 Corinthians 4:4, we get a very simple way that Satan is at work. He's described as the god of this world..." He's the "...the god of this world..." Satan is having his way. 1 Peter 5 describes him as a lion that is... that is, really, he's just roaring, and he's "... seeking someone to devour." Ephesians 2 describes him as "...the prince of the power of the air..." Right? This is Satan, and he's at work, and how is he at work? He's blinded the minds of unbelievers. This is Satanic. It's demonic activity. The fact that unbelievers are blinded and still have not seen and fully understood and believed on the glory of Jesus Christ and who He is, shows that Satan is at work. This is how Satan is functioning as he is still alive and well in this world.

What else? It's not just blinding unbelievers, it's also his work in dividing and, really, tweaking doctrines and the teaching of God's word as 1 Timothy 4:1 states. All right? We have this understanding that... this warning, really, it's a warning that... we must understand that times will come where people devote themselves to deceitful spirits and the teachings of demons. Do

people understand that's what they're doing right away? Maybe not. But there's plenty of churches, there's plenty of people, that think that they're on the right path, but they could be completely misguided, and this is the work of Satan and demons, taking people, drawing them away from what is true, or mixing it in where you get a little bit of truth and a little bit of lie and somehow being okay with that. So, you read a passage like our passage in Mark and you think, I don't understand this. I don't fully relate to it. But you need to keep this in mind - Satan is at work; demons are having their way and blinding people from the gospel and tweaking and turning the doctrine of God's word into error as they try and change it.

So be reminded this is happening. And if I can give us some encouragement here, we have hope. We have absolute hope, and that has to do it - and centers upon Jesus and what we're going to see He does in the book of Mark. Right? Jesus, He was willing to become like us, to share in flesh and blood. He Himself, likewise, partook of the same things that, through death, He might destroy the one who has the power of death; that is the devil. Jesus was willing to not only come to this earth but to die and to rise again and end, really, for good, the devil's strategy. Satan's game plan has been, really, abolished and done away with. This is what Jesus did when He went to the cross and rose again.

And then, I think, maybe, the verse that helps summarize the spiritual realms and forces for all of us as we live today as believers is Ephesians 6:12; "...we do not wrestle against flesh and blood [That's not our battle. That's not our fight], but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places." So, we have Paul. We have the author of Hebrews. We have these... we have Peter. We have different New Testament authors telling us that Satan is still at work. Demons are having their way, and you and I need to be aware of that. That's why it's so important for us to engage in good deeds. That's why it's so important for us to come together in fellowship as, really, a body of Christ. That's why it's so important for us to be committed to the word of God. That's why this is... these things are all so important because we declare something that's greater than what this world even knows. We declare something that goes beyond what's even seen. We declare to the heavenly realms, we declare to the angels above, the mystery of the unfolding wisdom of God in the creation of the church, calling us to Himself.

So, you read a passage like we're having here in Mark, and you're tempted to kind of distance yourself. I would encourage you - be reminded of what the Bible teaches about this topic. Satan is the god of this age and this world. He is having his way, and we must be aware. We must be on the alert and on guard. So as we turn back to our passage here in Mark, what do we find this demon possessed man saying? He says, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God." Such an ironic thing; a demon, an unclean spirit, declaring truth about Jesus. It's such an interesting thing that this would happen here. Here's this demon speaking as an unclean spirit but calling Jesus clean, "...the Holy One..." "...the Holy One of God." This kind of ironic statement, this ironic thing taking place here... Demons are not dumb. All right? They're not stupid. Satan's schemes, right, are crafty. This is something that... they're aware of some of these things that are unfolding. The people in the synagogue don't fully comprehend yet who Jesus is and what He'll do, but here's this demon saying it pretty much as clear as day. So Jesus is identified as "...the Holy One of God."

What do we find next in our text? We find the exorcism. It does not last for long. This interruption explodes for a moment as he cries out. And then, we come to verses 25 and 26; "But Jesus rebuked him, saying, 'Be silent, and come out of him!' And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying out with a loud voice, came out of him." So, we have this exorcism takes place, and notice what Jesus does. Right? He rebukes this spirit. He rebukes this demon saying two things, "Be silent, and come out of him!" Jesus is just cutting him off. Jesus is speaking. Enough! You're done. You're done with this interruption. All right? Jesus is not like this person that, you know, kind of works with customer care in their business, and you have the angry man on the phone that just is blowing up about how he hates the product, and he wants his money back. Okay, I understand sir. Oh, okay. (Keep yelling. Keep yelling.) Okay, what I'd like to do is... Oh. (Keep yelling. Keep yelling.) All right? And you don't know how to even get in here. Jesus encounters this man that is yelling because he's demon possessed, and He says, "Be silent...!" This guy stops. He doesn't keep crying out. Jesus shuts him down and not only silencing him and saying enough, says get out of him. He rebukes this demon and casts him out of this man.

It's interesting because when you look at different texts that surround this time period, and there were other people at this time that tried to act like magicians or sorcerers, and they tried to kind of pull off this way of, I guess, witchcraft of some sort. Right? Where they would have these spirits, and they would have people that are sick, and they would try and do these different spells. They would try these different incantations and repetitions of words and props and bringing things, and they would do all this just to try and get some spirit or some thing out of someone. And does Jesus need any of that? Does He need a wand of some sort? Does He need to repeat Himself? Not at all. He sets Himself apart from any of these other posers that try and be magicians and sorcerers and He just simply speaks. That's all He has to do. He just has to speak, and as God spoke, and it was in creation, Jesus speaks and this spirit, this unclean spirit, this demon, is gone. He just speaks. That's all He needs to do. He speaks with authority.

And this demon gives this final display of resistance as he leaves, kind of, almost, in anger in verse 26; "And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying out with a loud voice, came out of him." Had no choice - the demon had absolutely no choice and had to leave as Jesus spoke. Let me also remind you that demons, not only are they smart, but also, they're strong. Demons are not weak, I mean, we're going to get to Acts 19 in a bit here, and when we get there, you learn of a story of a demon possessed man that's able to beat up several men. Seven men that try and come and cast this demon out, and this demon possessed man can fend them all off and beat them up. So this demon does not try to even put up a fight against Jesus. Jesus speaks and he's gone. This is the exorcism. This is Jesus authoritatively displaying His power.

So what's the response? In verse 27, we see the excitement, the excitement from the people - the excitement that comes from the people. Verse 27; "And they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, 'What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.'" Just want to remind you that this is more amazement from what we've already seen. Right? If you remember from our text as we pointed out back in verse 22, in the beginning, Jesus was just teaching. He was just teaching with His authority, and they were already amazed. Jesus came in speaking authoritatively from the word of God, and they were amazed then, as He spoke with "...authority, and not as the scribes." And then, we have this incident occur right in front of them, and

now, can you imagine their level of astonishment and wonder and marveling as it increases even more? And that's what the text tells us; "...they were all amazed..." again, even more so. They questioned among themselves, and they started, excited, you know, and a great way of talking; "What is this? A new teaching with authority!" This is something that they've never seen. This is something they've never experienced. They never heard of this. This is amazing. When is the last time you've seen anybody command so boldly and authoritatively and affectively? They had no correlation to anyone else that could come close to this.

And see, notice this. Notice the difference here, the amazement this time. "A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits..." There's a separation in their minds. Where in our text, even if you look at just in Mark, what's happened so far; you had Jesus talking to men, these fishermen, and they immediately left what they're doing and they followed Him. There's authority there. Jesus spoke, and they listened. They obeyed. And so Jesus has the authority in peoples' lives. As we know from other accounts of Scripture, He has the authority over nature. Jesus will conduct the affairs of the water and tell the wind what to do, but there's something different here, the realm that is unseen, the realm that people are terrified about. People make movies about this stuff. There's a fear that is settled in everyone regarding the unseen, the spiritual realm, and these people witness Jesus come in and display even authority over that, the unseen, the spiritual realm of angels and demons. This is something totally new that they've never seen. This is true authority - true authority.

And so the question that kind of is outstanding is... is there any limit to this guy's authority at this point? If He's even able to do that, where does it stop? Where does His jurisdiction stop and go no more? Is there a geographical limit? Is it only in Galilee? Can you really draw a line of where Jesus' authority stops? And when you have an account like this, you see it's even beyond this world. His authority is even over and beyond this world, and what we see around us and even into the unseen. This is true authority. As a result, in verse 28, our final verse, we see the expansion - the expansion that takes place. Verse 28; "And at once His fame spread everywhere throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee." As we've already indicated, this is something that people haven't... they've never seen this. They have nothing to compare it to. This is amazing.

And if you just think about what has happened in Mark so far, we know other things from Matthew and Luke and John, but just think about the gospel of Mark. How much has Jesus done in public up to this point? Not much. Maybe some people saw Him when He got baptized, but that was down in Judea, and that was in Galilee, so maybe those people weren't even there. And then you have Jesus calling some fishermen to Himself. So, maybe a couple people witnessed that, some family members, some coworkers that saw this. Jesus has not done a lot in public yet. This is the first thing He does. It's not like this ongoing thing where He does miracle after miracle after... This is the first, really, obviously, miracle of casting out a demon. And what happens immediately? Without question, "His fame spread everywhere throughout..." the city of Capernaum? No, beyond. "...His fame spread everywhere throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee." And that's not just the cities that are on the Sea of Galilee, that's the entire region, the area that is surrounding Galilee in the north. This is Jesus' one kind of act here of His authority, and it immediately becomes the trending topic that everyone's talking about. It immediately becomes the conversation that increases His fame in this region where He will do more and more miracles and more teaching. So, He becomes a local celebrity as a result of this one incident in a synagogue in Capernaum that we see.

Well, there are lots of leaders today, lots of politicians, religious leaders, the Pope; we can think of all these people and many people listen to them. Many people view them with highest regards and call them the authoritative figure, people with the most power, that we see around us today. Well, let me remind you all of those people, no matter how powerful you think they are, they have limitations. Their power only goes so far. It's only so effective. Whether it's just limited geographically or just by the nature of how many people they know, there's a limit. They only have so much power. They only have so much authority, just on this earth. And then there's Jesus; the One who has all authority. And when He left, in the Great Commission He said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me." Jesus, the One who has all authority over your life and my life, over this entire world. Jesus who has authority over the things we don't even see - the spiritual battle taking place - angels and demons - this spiritual realm. Jesus, the One who has authority even over that, who's King over all.

For those of you that have not surrendered and given yourself to this King, this one true authority, Jesus, I would encourage you to do so. Everyone else

will let you down. No politician can satisfy. No celebrity will fulfill and bring about the true change; it's not possible. There's a limitation. They're humans. They're limited. They have not the authority that they need, but we have Jesus, the One that has no limitations. Make Him your leader. He will not let you down. What He has promised, He will fulfill. I would encourage you - make Him your King. And for those that are endeavoring to follow Him and be subject to Him as King, continue. And I'd ask you just to reconsider, maybe, again, every area of your life. Have you fully surrendered? Are there still pockets? Are there still corners of your heart, of your mind, that you're hanging on to, that you're less likely to give up to Him? If so, surrender, surrender to the King who has all authority. He has all power. He has all strength to help you fight, to beat back sin and to pursue righteousness in faith.