

The Power of Jesus

Mark 1:21-34

- We are drawn to power.
- Tonight, millions of people will tune in to watch these massive, strong men battle it out in the Super Bowl.
- It is impressive to see these men, in peak physical condition, battle it out to see who comes out on top.
- Men, we often fall into the stereotype of “Tim the ‘Tool Man’ Taylor” from Home Improvement...more power!
- Power tools, powerful cars...we love power.
- You may say, “Well, actually, I am against all this modern push towards high tech and powerful tools. I prefer seeing a hand-crafted piece of furniture or a beautiful quilt.”
- Did you know that your admiration of that is still and admiration of power?
- You admire the craftsman or the seamstress who has such power and control over both the materials and their own hands that they can make it look like whatever they want.
- We are fascinated by the lives of powerful people, whether in Washington DC or in Hollywood.
- Whether we acknowledge it or not, we are drawn to power like moths to a flame.

- That’s nothing new. Throughout history, people have been drawn to power.
- So, what does that have to do with our walk through the book of Mark?
- As we continue our journey through Mark this morning, we are going to discover a clear truth: Jesus is powerful.
- In fact, that’s our “big idea” this morning: Jesus is powerful.

- That may not be an earth-shattering revelation to you this morning, but we are going to see three different ways that Jesus demonstrated His power during this first part of His earthly ministry.
- If you are wondering whether or not Jesus is able to take care of you, in light of this problem or that problem, my prayer is that you will see that He certainly is powerful enough to do whatever you need.
- As we see His power displayed three ways this morning, I hope you'll be drawn to Him.
- After we talk about His power, though, I want to finish up our time together with a word of caution.
- So, let's listen to this story from God's Word. Read along in **verses 21-27**.
- **Let's dive in, then, and see first that Jesus has...**

1) The power to teach.

- Look at **verses 21-22**.
- Let's get a little context to what is going on here.
- In those days, synagogues were the informal places people would come to worship and learn about God.
- They would especially get together on Saturdays, which is the Jewish Sabbath day.
- There were scribes who had studied both the laws and what other rabbis had said, and they would do the teaching on the Sabbath.
- If a traveling rabbi (teacher) was in town, they would invite him to speak.
- That's what they have done with Jesus. We already saw that he was traveling around to different areas, and last week we saw the gist of His message. Look back at **Mark 1:15** for a

refresher.

- This would have been a totally different message than what they were used to hearing.
- Mark says that Jesus' teaching was with authority, not like the scribes.
- The scribes who usually taught in synagogues would have known God's law inside and out, and they also know what the other rabbis, or teachers, had taught about those passages.
- When the scribes would teach, they would only say things like, "The Scriptures say this, and Rabbi so-and-so says this about that."
- Jesus, on the other hand, wasn't preaching anyone else's opinions; He was giving out new statements about God and interpreting passages like they never had been before.
- This would have been a huge shock, because only the best of the best rabbis could do that.
- Those rabbis had all kinds of formal training and came from distinguished families.
- Jesus didn't have any formal training and was the son of a carpenter, and yet He preached with this incredible authority.

- We look at it from this side of the story and understand what He was doing.
- Jesus had the power and authority to correctly interpret Scripture, because it is about Him and He is the source of it, since He is God.
- In fact, Jesus is even described as the Word of God:
In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him

nothing came into being that has come into being. (John 1:1-3, NASB95)

- When He came on the scene, He started teaching with an incredible authority that only He could have.
- Great; so what does that teach us?
- Well, if Jesus had the power and authority to teach then, then He still has the power to teach us now.
- Although the Bible was written thousands of years ago, His teaching is still as authoritative as ever.
- We're not just talking about the specific words of Jesus, though, because all of the Bible is God's words to us:
All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, (2 Timothy 3:16, ESV)
- We believe and teach, that cover to cover, this book is the Word of God.
- If He says that something is wrong, it is wrong. If He says something is true, it is true.
- If you are going to follow Jesus, you have to come to grips with the fact that He has the authority to tell you what to do.
- **With that, though, we see a second aspect of Jesus' power:**

2) The power to free.

- Listen to **verses 23-27** again.
- That would have been something to see, wouldn't it?
- In the middle of Jesus' teaching, this man begins to yell at Him.
- He is yelling because he is demon possessed.
- "C'mon Sean, you seem like a smart guy. You don't believe in all this stuff, do you?"

- I absolutely do.
 - Some have said that this was just a primitive confusion about the way diseases worked because so often those who are possessed are often healed of some physical malady when the demon is cast out.
 - We'll see in just a minute, though, that they knew that not all sickness was demonic in origin.
 - To our modern minds, we may be tempted to look at this as superstition, but let me be clear with you this morning: the Bible clearly teaches that there are angels and demons.
 - We don't know everything about them, but we do know that they are still around. Satan, who is the head demon, is still trying to destroy what God is doing.
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- The demon in this man knew exactly who Jesus was, and it didn't like it one bit.
 - The demons know that Jesus was coming to rescue humanity and defeat Satan and evil, which is why the demon asks what Jesus is doing.
 - Did you notice Jesus' response?
 - He didn't answer the demon's questions; He simply freed the man by casting the demon out.
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- Here's what I want you to see from this: Jesus has the power to free you from slavery to any sin.
 - For this man, he was trapped in sin so deeply that he had a demon controlling him.
 - With one command, Jesus is able to free this man from that.
 - If you are here today and you are struggling with any sin, perhaps an addiction, a habit, something you would be ashamed to tell anyone about, I want you to clearly hear that

Jesus can break the power of that sin and free you from having to do it.

- It won't always be easy, but I can promise you He has the power.
- You see, Jesus took your sin upon Himself when He was dying on the cross. When He died, He died under the weight of your sin and mine. When He rose from the dead, though, He proved that He had once and for all broken the power of sin.
- If you have trusted in Him, then here's what the Bible says is true of you:

Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. (Romans 6:16–18, NASB95)

- You were enslaved to sin and Jesus came to free you from that sin!
- He has power over demons; don't you think He can exercise that power over your own sinful heart?
- As believers in Christ, as His followers, His disciples, we still sin, but when we do, we do it by choice. We still fight with our old way of life, but it isn't because Jesus isn't strong enough to deliver us, it's that we choose not to tap into His strength.
- From the very early days of His ministry, we see that Jesus has the power to free us, even from demons themselves.
- There's one more aspect of His power that we want to look at this morning, and it may perhaps be one of the most misunderstood.
- **Jesus also has...**

3) The power to heal.

- Look at **verses 28-34**.
- Mark, again, gives us very little detail.
- In rapid succession, though, we see that Jesus has the power to heal people, even from natural diseases.
- Simon, whose name will later be changed to Peter, has a sick mother-in-law, and Jesus heals her.
- That night, people come in droves to be healed.
- Jesus exercises His power over demons and over natural disease, healing many.
- Here is where we see that they understood not every sickness was because of demons...Look at **verse 34**.

- Jesus certainly is able to heal physically, but the greatest healing He offers has nothing to do with cancer or a cold.
- God spoke through a man named Isaiah, hundreds of years before Jesus would come to earth, to give us this picture:
But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5, NASB95)
- What happened to Simon's mother-in-law? What about the untold numbers of people who were healed that night?
- Every single one of them got sick again and died.
- However, for those who trust in Christ, we have a healing that goes far deeper than the healing of some ailment; we are permanently and forever healed of the disease of sin.
- Yes, we will get sick in this life, and eventually unless Jesus returns, we will all die.
- Yet in that sickness, and even in death, we have the peace of knowing that Jesus has healed me from my greatest disease.

- Jesus has the power to teach us who He is and who we need to become. He has the power to free us from any sin, and He has the power to heal any disease, including our greatest need.
 - Jesus truly is powerful.
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- As I said at the beginning, I want to end with a word of caution.
 - When it comes to powerful people, we have several reasons we want to know them or be around them.
 - Sometimes, it is because we want them to do something for us. We want them to entertain us or make something for us or pass a law we like or fix us or something else.
 - Other times, it is because we want to feel special about ourselves. If we are associated with powerful people, then there has to be something in us that is worth something. We like to name drop, so the bigger the name, the cooler we must be.
 - That is still the same idea, by the way—you want them to give you something, but this time it is status and value instead of something more tangible.
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- Don't come to Jesus that way.
 - Some people say, "I hear Jesus is powerful, so I'm going to give this church thing a shot."
 - For a while, things seem better, they feel better, and life looks good.
 - Eventually, though, God doesn't work like they want Him to. Maybe someone they love dies of an illness or work doesn't pan out or something happens with their kids or family.
 - They give up because it seems like Jesus just isn't powerful enough or that He doesn't.

- They turn to find something else to follow, hoping it will work out, and they never are satisfied.
- They didn't truly turn to Christ; they turned to what He could do.
- Instead, this morning, I would challenge you to let this drive you to humility.
- You see, the powerful God with authority to speak into every situation in your life loves you.
- That powerful God can give you freedom over the sin you fight on a daily basis, and although you'll never be perfect in this life, He can work to help you grow.
- Not only that, if you trust Him, He has healed you of the greatest sickness we have—the sickness of sin that has turned our hearts to ourselves and away from Him.
- Don't turn to Him today for what He can do; turn to Him for who He is!
- It's an act of surrender, saying "God, I realize you're bigger than I could ever imagine. You are more powerful than I know. I don't understand everything, but you are telling me to trust you, so I do. I trust that you can teach me who I need to be and that you can free me from sin and heal me of the sickness in my heart. No matter what else you allow, I trust you."
- We will see a clear picture of that in two weeks when we get to the next passage where we see Jesus healing.
- You don't have to wait two weeks to make that choice, though. You can surrender to Him today.