



Unit .21

Session .01

Jesus Reveals His Power

Scripture



Mark 1:21-28, 35-42

21 And they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath he entered the synagogue and was teaching. **22** And they were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes. **23** And immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, **24** “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.” **25** But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be silent, and come out of him!” **26** And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying out with a loud voice, came out of him. **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.” **28** And at once his fame spread everywhere

throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee. ... **35** And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed. **36** And Simon and those who were with him searched for him, **37** and they found him and said to him, “Everyone is looking for you.” **38** And he said to them, “Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out.” **39** And he went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons. **40** And a leper came to him, imploring him, and kneeling said to him, “If you will, you can make me clean.” **41** Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand and touched him and said to him, “I will; be clean.” **42** And immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean.

Intro Options



Main Point:
Jesus' teaching
and miracles reveal
His divinity.

Option 1

A display of power often exhibits not only authority but identity. In the movie *The Incredibles*, a family of superheroes was forced into hiding, living as civilians in the suburbs because of a change in the public's perception of superheroes. Bob Parr, the father of this family, hid his powers so that his identity as Mr. Incredible would not be revealed.

Everybody knew who Mr. Incredible was by his powers of superhuman strength. On a number of occasions, Bob lost control of himself and displayed his extraordinary strength in front of other civilians, resulting in multiple relocations of his family. When he had lifted a car up above his head with the ease of lifting a baby or slammed someone through multiple walls as if they were made of paper, his identity became apparent to all around him.

- **What are some other stories of people hiding their power in order to hide their identity?**

Bob Parr had power that revealed his identity, but he had to hide it. Unlike Bob Parr, Jesus did not need to hide His power or who He was. On some occasions, Jesus did choose to conceal His identity, but not out of fear but according to the will of His Father. Instead, Jesus taught with authority and displayed His power to back up that authority. In this unit, we will examine how He revealed His power throughout His early ministry. As we do so, we will see how the ways in which Jesus taught and performed miracles with authority displayed His identity as the Son of God, the One who had the power to proclaim and provide salvation.

Option 2

In the previous unit, we took a look at the beginnings of Jesus' earthly ministry. In this unit, we will continue that story. Specifically, in this session, we will examine how Jesus revealed His power throughout His early ministry. As we do so, we will see how the ways in which Jesus taught and performed miracles with authority displayed His identity as the Son of God, the One who had the power to proclaim and provide salvation. It is because we have experienced this power of Jesus to save us from sin that we continue His mission of compassionately telling others of His love and salvation.

- **What do you think the connection is between Jesus' mission and His miracles?**

TEACHING PLAN

Read Mark 1:21-28.




As we see in this passage, it became evident to those around Jesus that His words were not like the typical teaching they were used to hearing in the synagogue. The scribes of the day did not merely copy things down but also helped the people understand scriptural principles by teaching and interpreting the law. They were scholars, yet they did not interpret the Scriptures using solely their own opinion; rather, they quoted and cited other experts and scholars.

Imagine the people's shock when Jesus walked in and began teaching without quoting anyone else. Jesus was able to teach in such a manner because His words came entirely from His own authority. Jesus' speaking with such authority revealed who He is—the Son of God—though the people did not recognize it at the time.

▪ What makes someone recognizable and believable as an authority on a subject?

Not only did Jesus reveal His identity through the authority of His word, but He revealed it through His miracles as well. Immediately after Jesus taught in the synagogue with authority, He displayed the legitimacy of that authority by casting a demon out of a man.

People today struggle to believe in the idea of demons. Some prefer to think of demon-possession in the Bible as a misunderstood medical condition that we'd treat differently today, but this idea does not explain the accounts in the Bible. In New Testament times, demons clearly had the power to oppress and possess people in an effort to distract from and distort God's work in the world.

Jesus' power, which flows from His deity, should compel us to follow Him. He has authority over our entire lives because of His identity as the Son of God—He is our Creator (John 1:1-3). If our lives are submitted to Jesus as Lord, then we will develop, as enabled by the Holy Spirit, an attitude of humble obedience to the powerful Son of God, who is also our Savior. And how does Jesus command us to live? He tells us to spread the good news about His power and authority over sin, death, and evil (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 6:7-13). 

▪ What does it mean for you to submit things in your life to Jesus' power?

▪ What are some things in your life that are easy/difficult to submit to Jesus' power?

Read Mark 1:35-38.



Jesus knew the purpose of His ministry, but the people around Him often misunderstood it. Both the people of Capernaum and Jesus' own disciples missed the point of Jesus' words and actions. They got caught up in Jesus' rising fame and miraculous healings and were unable to see Jesus' purpose behind it all (Mark 1:21-34). He declared with clarity why He came so that we might know and follow Him. He gathered His disciples to move on—out of Capernaum, away from the fame and the crowds that sought after only His miracles—in order that He might preach elsewhere. The Son of God came to preach the gospel to the world.

COMMENTARY

Main Point:
Jesus' teaching
and miracles reveal
His divinity.

Mark 1

23-25. “Mark used the terms ‘evil [literally ‘unclean’] spirit’ and ‘demon’ to refer to the same entity. Demons were evil in themselves, and they made the persons they affected both ceremonially and morally unclean. As difficult as the concept of the demonic is for most people today, it cannot be satisfactorily treated as a primitive explanation for various kinds of physical and psychological illness. A better explanation is that there is much less evidence of the demonic today because Jesus won a decisive, although not yet total, victory over it.”¹

“Regardless of the details of the demonic realm, the point remains that Jesus’ power, as demonstrated in His teaching and miracles, supersedes that of demons and every other creature. The typical technique used in exorcisms in Jesus’ day was to urge the demon out of someone by referring to the power of one or multiple gods while using magical words and rituals.”² Just as Jesus referred to no one else but stood on His own authority when teaching, He also commanded the demon out of the man without reference to anyone else’s power.

35. It is worth noting that Jesus seemed to view retreating alone with the Father in prayer as essential. Perhaps Jesus was tempted to enjoy His fame and continue to perform miracles for the crowds. Yet Jesus relied on prayer as a way of keeping His mind centered on His true purpose. Although it was not easy to leave behind the popularity and face the coming suffering of the cross, Jesus came to us from God for just this, and so in this purpose He remained.

As believers in Christ, we have access to the same abiding relationship with the Father as we continue on in our God-given purpose. We are invited into the same race, and like Jesus, we can finish well by not giving into temptation and not yielding to the pressures of the world. Part of finishing well requires deep dependence on God through abiding connection with Him in prayer.



99 Essential Doctrines (p. 88, DDG)

Jesus' Deity

Within the person of Jesus Christ, there are two natures—the divine nature and the human nature. Scripture teaches He is fully divine and fully human. His divinity is on display in passages that describe Him as being equal with God (John 1:1-18; Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 1:15-20; Heb. 1:1-3). The New Testament also points to the deity of Christ by showing how He possesses attributes that God alone possesses (Mic. 5:2; John 1:4), how He performs works that only God performs (Mark 2:5-12; John 10:28; 17:2), and how He Himself claims to be the Son of God (Matt. 26:63-64; John 8:58; 10:30; 17:5).

TEACHING PLAN

- **What are some practical things that remind you of your mission to share the gospel with others?**

Read Mark 1:39-42.



Jesus, being fully human and fully divine, allowed His heart to be moved by the suffering of our world. His heart of love for the Father and His creation moved Him to action. Jesus carried the concerns of His Father and also experienced them completely as a human. Jesus hates evil and the ways it causes destruction in the world, so Jesus reached out and healed the leper who had come to Him in faith—a perfectly just and compassionate response.

The fact that Jesus was not dispassionate to this man's suffering is a source of great hope to each of us—Jesus cares about our suffering. This is great news to us because as the Son of God, Jesus is the One who has the power to do something about our suffering. By defeating death once and for all on the cross, He has freed us from the power of and eternal enslavement to death, both here and now and yet more fully in the age to come.

- **What are some situations in your school or community that should move you to act with the compassion of Christ?**
- **What kinds of fears or prejudices might hinder us from being moved with the same compassion of Christ?**

In the same way that Jesus' compassionate heart for the man with leprosy caused him to move toward, not away from, the leper, so too Jesus' compassion causes Him to move toward us even in our sinfulness. It is God's nature to be merciful, and being fully God, Jesus extends merciful compassion to those in need.

Jesus' compassion led the Son of God to come face-to-face with our sin as a man and to die for it on the cross. Jesus did not leave us alone in our diseased condition of sin; instead, He entered straight into it to heal us of it. By faith in Him, Jesus takes on our guilt so that He might end it and we might enter into the family of God through Him. But the story doesn't end there. The Son of God could not be defeated by death, the penalty earned by our sin. After substituting Himself in our place and paying our debt, He rose victoriously from the grave to be enthroned at the right hand of God, where He intercedes for us with continued compassion and continues to save sinners who have faith in Him.



- **How will you act in faith in light of the power and compassion of the Son of God?**

COMMENTARY

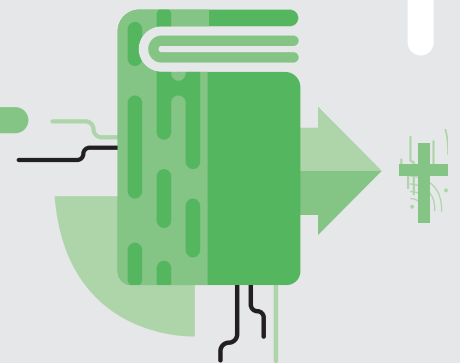
Main Point:
Jesus' teaching
and miracles reveal
His divinity.

Mark 1

41-42. “Jesus expressed his compassion for the leper by touching him. Most people would have healed the man first and then touched him. But not Jesus. He knew this man had not felt human touch in a long time, so he reached out to touch him first. By touching the man, Jesus revealed his attitude toward ceremonial law. By touching the leper, he himself would be made ceremonially unclean. Jesus placed love and compassion above ritual and regulation.”³

(p. 89, DDG) **Christ Connection**

From the beginning of Jesus' earthly ministry, the people recognized that He was different. Jesus taught with authority and performed miracles to fulfill the purpose of His earthly ministry and show that He is the Son of God, the One who came to proclaim and provide salvation.



Our Mission

God's Story has always been designed to connect with our story. It is because of His Story that our stories make sense, have meaning, and carry on into eternity. Use the questions below to help think through how His Story connects with your own. Suggested answers to these questions can be found on the right-hand side of the page for leaders.

Head



Share of a time when you misjudged someone's intentions, or when someone misjudged your own.

Why should Jesus' singular focus of His life and mission influence the way we think about our own? What are some things that distract us from our true purpose in life?

Heart



What can we learn about compassion from this account?

Why is it important to have both feelings of compassion as well as actions of compassion?

Hands



What does Jesus' identity as the Son of God influence the way He lives His life?

How should our identity as adopted sons and daughters of God through Christ change the way we address needs in our schools, neighborhoods, and families?

Main Point: Jesus' teaching and miracles reveal His divinity.



Head

It is easy to misjudge people's intentions. The disciples did it here, but before we judge them for missing the point, let us pause to consider our own lives. How often does our true purpose of sharing Christ's love through the gospel get lost in our longing for fame, recognition, or the whirlwind of glamorous miracles displayed around us? Though we may long for and relish Jesus' miracles, we must always long for Jesus and His real purpose more.

Remember that Jesus didn't get caught up in worldly passions and pleasures, in temptations to fame, and the idolatry of works. He kept His heart, soul, mind, and strength fixed on His Father and His heavenly purposes. Even as fully God, Jesus chose to fulfill His purpose on earth in a manner fully dependent on Father God. By communing with God through prayer, Jesus stayed focused on the mission set before Him.



Heart

When Jesus healed the man of leprosy, He embodied and provided a model of what it means to have compassion. He entered directly into the man's uncleanness to display His care. Touching this sick man likely would have been revolting, unsettling, and made any person ceremonially unclean. But Jesus, being the fulfillment of the law and the source of all holiness (Matt. 5:17), valued compassionate action over the perceptions of people. He was unafraid and unashamed to enter into this man's uncleanness in order to bring him out of it.



Hands

Jesus' teaching and miracles point us not only toward His power but to both His purpose and His compassion as well. All three—power, purpose, and compassion—flow from His identity as the Son of God. In light of this revelation, our purpose is clear: We are to continue to preach and share the good news of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth. Our purpose is defined by the One who is full of power. He equips us to fulfill that purpose with the same power through His Holy Spirit. We are to proclaim the gospel with the deepest depths of compassion, entering with boldness into spaces of hurt and pain that our society tells us ought to be avoided at all costs. We have a calling to tell others about salvation through Christ—that Jesus is the Son of God, the One who came to proclaim and provide salvation—with compassion for them today and concern for their eternity.