

Bible Stories for Adults

Jesus Heals at Capernaum

Mark 1:21-39

Opening

- Gathering: Why was it important for Jesus to serve others during His time of ministry?
- Today's Focus: Jesus revealed God's love and compassion by serving those who came to Him.
- Key Verses: *The people were amazed at His teaching, because He taught them as one who had authority, not as teachers of the law.* Mark 1:22
- News about Him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee.* Mark 1:28

Opening Prayer

Lesson

Mark Begins His Story of Jesus (*Mark 1:1-20*)

Luke's gospel begins with an explanation of what he was writing and why. How does Mark begin?

Mark 1:1 = Very simply, Here's the story of Jesus...

Luke gives a couple of chapters telling of John's preparations. What does Mark say about John?

Mark 1:2-8 = John came as promised by Isaiah to prepare the way for the Messiah

Luke paints wonderful pictures of Jesus' birth, childhood and baptism. What does Mark tell us?

Mark 1:9-11 = Starts at Jesus' baptism, tells basic important facts

Luke tells how Jesus withstood Satan's temptations of human desires. How descriptive is Mark?

Mark 1:12-13 = Just the basics

Luke speaks of Jesus' success in Galilee and rejection in Nazareth. What does Mark say?

Mark 1:14-15 = Jesus went to Galilee and taught of God's kingdom

Last week's story in Luke shows Peter's faith was built gradually. Does Mark show this growth?

Mark 1:16-20 = No story, just calling to some fishermen and they leave everything

Why the Difference?

Matthew - Jesus is the Promised Messiah

Written for Jews to easily recognize how Jesus fulfilled the Messianic prophecies

Luke - Jesus is the Son of Man

Focuses on the humanity of Jesus (Birth, Growth, Work, Suffering, Death, Risen Body)

John - Jesus is the Son of God

Describes Jesus in analogies as we can only describe God in relation to what we know

Mark - Jesus is the Servant

Written to Christians in Rome, Shows Jesus actively going to all people to serve them

What verse best summarizes the focus of Mark's gospel?

Mark 10:45 = *Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, & to give His life as a ransom*

Who was Mark? = Cousin of Barnabas in Colossians 4:10, John Mark

Acts 12:25; 13:13; 15:36-40 = Left Paul on 1st journey, with Barnabas on 2nd

Was Paul ever able to forgive Mark and work with him?

2 Timothy 4:11 = Yes, Mark helped Paul in Rome - Also Colossians 4:10 and Philemon 24

Where did Mark get the information for his gospel?

1 Peter 5:13 = From Peter while imprisoned in Rome, Considered to be Peter's gospel

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A Teacher with Authority (*Mark 1:21-22*)

Where does Jesus begin serving in Mark's gospel?

Mark 1:21 = At the synagogue in Capernaum, invited to give sermon on Sabbath

Note: Today's stories in Mark are also recorded in Luke 4:31-44

Synagogue rulers would invite educated laymen or visiting rabbis to give sermon

Jesus was invited His first Sabbath in Capernaum (Ruler was Jairus - Luke 8:41+)

Scribes - Originated from priests who copied the Old Testament scrolls (printers)

Priestly background, training and familiarity with text led them to become the teachers

Experts in interpreting Jewish religious and civic laws and their interpretations

3 duties: Define rules for every situation in life, Teach this *Oral Law*, Judge gray areas

Teachings and rulings were based on authority of ancient rabbis

"There is a teaching that ..." "Rabbi so-and-so says ..."

Interpretations of interpretations led to very complex permutations

Heavy burden on people to do right, people tried to learn from confusing rabbis

What did the Jews of Capernaum think of this new rabbi? = Spoke on His own authority

Mark 1:22 = Amazed at His teaching - Listened to His words, unlike at Nazareth

Demons (*Mark 1:23*)

How moving was Jesus' authoritative speech? = Jesus' 1st encounter with demon was in a synagogue

Mark 1:23 = A demon inside a congregation member got paranoid and blew his cover

Demons and devils were everywhere according to Jews and the whole ancient world

Lived in unclean places - tombs, where there was no cleansing water, howling desert

Dangerous to lonely and night-time travelers, newly married, children (guardian angels)

Demons took over thinking, speaking, feeling and actions of the possessed individual

Egyptians said there were 36 parts of the human body, demons could enter and control any

Demon possession caused illness - deafness, dumbness, fever, insanity, leprosy

Exorcists tried to revolt or scare out demons - Smelly root up nose hoping demon couldn't take it

Used magical rituals and incantations invoking higher spirits

In severe cases, a hole was bored in the skull to let the demon out

Why don't we see evidence of demons and demon possession in today's world?

2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 = Satan deceives in delusions acceptable to the day's culture

What is the goal of the work of Satan and his demons?

1 Timothy 4:1-2 = To lead people to abandon their faith and God's truth

Why does Satan want to pull people from faith in Jesus and God?

Revelation 20:7-9 = To gather troops for the final battle

Authority Over Demons (*Mark 1:24-26*)

How did the demon's paranoia show itself? = Magicians subdued spiritual forces by invoking names

Mark 1:24 = Tried to subdue Jesus by invoking His name

Where do we see another example of a demon trying to keep power by identifying someone?

Acts 16:16-18 = Possessed slave girl in Philippi, Paul called on name of Jesus

What incantations and calling on higher spirits did Jesus use to exorcise the demon?

Mark 1:25-26 = None, Commanded demon out on His own authority, didn't want to go

Could just anybody use Jesus' name to exorcise demons?

Acts 19:13-16 = No

How were the apostles and Paul and other Christians able to drive out demons?

Mark 3:14-15; 16:17 = Jesus gave His authority to those who believe

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The People React (*Mark 1:27-28*)

How did people react to this rabbi who taught and exorcised without referring to higher powers?

Mark 1:27 = They were amazed at his authority, Even demons obeyed Him directly

What impact did this have on Jesus' ministry? = Luke says *surrounding area*

Mark 1:28 = *News about Him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee*

Why did word of Jesus spread so rapidly that same day and why should it spread today?

Acts 4:20 = *We cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard*

Another Demon (*Mark 1:29-31*)

Where did Jesus go to have Sabbath dinner? = Do you take Jesus home with you after church?

Mark 1:29 = Peter and Andrew's home in Capernaum, Went with James and John

What opportunity to serve was waiting for Jesus there? = Father-in-law probably dead

Mark 1:30 = Peter's mother-in-law sick with fever, probably lived with Peter

Dr. Luke calls it a *major fever*. This could have been one of three common fevers:

Malta fever - Weakness, anemia, wasting away; lasted for months; ended in death

Intermittent fever - Like typhoid fever

Malaria - Miserable, often with jaundice; Very common in Capernaum (marshy ground)

Talmud (Jewish writings) describes the cure: Tie an iron knife to a thorn bush by a braid of hair;

Recite Exodus 3:2-3, 4 and 5 on successive days; Pronounce a magical formula

Did Jesus do this or a similar procedure to serve Peter's mother-in-law with a cure?

Mark 1:31a = *He went to her, took her hand and helped her up*

How effective was this simple action of Jesus against a disease like malaria? = No recovery needed

Mark 1:31b = She immediately recovered and regained all strength - she served them

Did it really take no effort on Jesus' part to heal people like this?

Luke 8:44-46 = He gave of Himself when He healed, His power left Him

Resting on the Sabbath (*Mark 1:32-34*)

Was Jesus finally able to relax after teaching, casting out a demon and healing on a day of rest?

Mark 1:32 = Not much, people flocked to Him after sundown

Why did they wait until sundown? = Carrying anything heavier than 2 dried figs was work

Exodus 31:14-15 = Jews were forbidden to work on the Sabbath, ended at sundown

Capernaum homes were single room buildings. Did people crowd into Peter's home?

Mark 1:33 = No, they gathered at the door

What did Jesus do when faced with this crowd?

Mark 1:34 = Dumb question, He healed them, took care of their needs

Why wouldn't He let the demons tell who He was?

Matthew 11:25-27 = It was not God's plan for Satan to reveal His son

John 18:36 = It was too early in His ministry, everyone misunderstood the Messiah

How do the healings on this day help prove to us that Jesus was the promised One of God?

Matthew 8:14-17 = Fulfilled Isaiah 53:4 - *took up our infirmities and carried our diseases*

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Re-energized (*Mark 1:35*)

After giving of Himself through healing late into the night, how did Jesus regain His strength?

Mark 1:35 = Got up before anyone else would be up and found a place to pray

How often did Jesus try to speak with His Father in the morning?

Isaiah 50:4 = *Morning by morning* - Prayed to the Father frequently

How important was prayer to Jesus' healing ministry?

Mark 9:28-29 = Prayer is essential in staying close with God and carrying His power

In the Limelight (*Mark 1:36-39*)

What did the others in Peter's house do when they woke up and found that Jesus was gone?

Mark 1:36-37 = They went looking for Jesus, Didn't realize yet that He prayed alot

Was Jesus excited by the news that He was popular and people were wanting to see Him?

Mark 1:38 = He looked at it as time to move on to other cities to bring the good news

What did He do?

Mark 1:39 = *Traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in synagogues and driving out demons*

How can we get some of the stamina and strength that Jesus had?

John 20:21-22 = We already have it, He gave us His Spirit to do His work

Luke 18:1 = We should take Jesus' lead and *always pray and not give up*

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. Do I serve others as Jesus did?
(*Mark 10:42-45; 9:33-35; John 12:26; 13:1-17; Ephesians 4:11-12; 5:21; 6:7; 1 Timothy 3:13; 1 Peter 4:10-11; 5:2*)
2. How do Satan and his demons attack me today?
(*Mark 1:23; 13:5; Job 2:1-7; Jeremiah 29:8-9; Matthew 24:24; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:1-3; 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12; 1 Timothy 4:1-2; 1 Peter 5:8-9; 1 John 4:1-6; Revelation 13:13-14*)
3. Do I openly proclaim to others that Jesus is God's Son, at least as much as Satan's demons did?
(*Mark 1:23-24; 5:6-9; Proverbs 3:6; Matthew 10:32-33; 16:13-19; John 12:42-43; Romans 10:9-13; 1 John 2:22-23*)
4. How do I recognize and live under Jesus' authority?
(*Mark 1:22, 27; 2:8-12; Daniel 7:13-14; Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 10:22; John 3:35; 10:17-18; 13:13; 17:2; 20:21-22; Philippians 2:9-11*)
5. How eagerly do I seek to be in Jesus' presence?
(*Mark 1:33, 36-37; 2:1-4; 6:32-33, 55; Psalm 16:11; 51:11; Matthew 6:33; 7:7-8; 8:18-22; John 12:20-21; Hebrews 11:6*)