

1. Jesus' Power

- a. Mark's gospel pretty much hits the ground running. It begins by introducing John the Baptist, then immediately has Jesus baptized, John arrested, Jesus sent out into the wilderness to be tempted, and then Jesus calling the first four of his disciples. These things happen in just a few paragraphs, but in all likelihood we are talking about a few months time. Minimum this took place over 40 days because that is how long he was tempted in the desert.
- b. The next story Mark tells is of Jesus teaching and casting out demons in the synagogue. The response to this was that the people said, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him." His fame then spread throughout the entire vicinity of Galilee. (Mark 1:27, 28)
- c. Following this, Simon, is later renamed Peter, takes Jesus and the other disciples to his house in Capernaum. This seems to be where Jesus established his base of operations. When they got there Simon's mother is sick in bed with a fever. Luke adds in his account that it was a high fever, meaning it was pretty serious. Jesus took her by the hand and she stood up, the fever leaving her instantly.
- d. The result of these displays of Jesus' power- in particular the one from the previous story- caused the people to come out in droves for healing.
 - i. 32 When evening came, after the sun had set, they began bringing to Him all those who were sick and those who were demon-possessed. 33 The whole town was assembled at the door, 34 and He healed many who were sick with various diseases and drove out many demons. But He would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew Him.
 - ii. As a note, they came after sun set because it had been the sabbath, and rabbinic law would not allow for the carrying of any "burden" on the sabbath. So the sick and demon possessed waited until the sabbath was over in order to pursue their potential healings.
- e. In verse 27, they commented on the power and authority of his teaching. Verse 28 says that his fame spread throughout the entire region of Galilee. But by now it wasn't the authority of his teaching that they were interested in. They were interested in his power to heal and cast out demons.

2. Jesus' Mission

- a. The next morning, before the sun came up, Jesus got up and went out to a deserted place to pray. Bear in mind, verse 33 says that the entire town was gathered at Simon's door and they didn't come until after sun down. Jesus had a very late night. Yet he got up extremely early to go out and pray. This was the only way he was going to get any solitude. If he waited until noon to walk out Simon's door, he would have immediately been flocked and never had time for his alone time with the Father.
- b. Simon and the others went out looking for him. When they found him they let him know that everyone was looking for him. This is exactly why he got up so

early. Simon and the others wanted him to come back to the house and do more healings and miracles. They were new at this, and all they understood was that whatever Jesus was doing was working. He was drawing attention and gathering quite the following. A few more miracles certainly wouldn't hurt in solidifying the base.

- c. But Jesus responded, in verse 38, "Let's go on to the neighboring villages so that I may preach there too. This is why I have come." The next verse then tells us that they went into all of Galilee preaching in the synagogues and driving out demons.
 - d. Isn't it interesting that the people came to Jesus for healing, not teaching. Yet Jesus left behind many in Capernaum that he had yet to heal so that he could preach in other towns, saying, "This is why I have come." What does this tell us?
 - e. It tells us that his mission wasn't the miracles. His mission was the message. He came preaching the kingdom of God and how he had brought access to it. That is the message he took from place to place. The miracles served another purpose. They weren't his goal, they were evidence in his ministry that the things he was teaching were true.
 - i. Jesus attests to this very fact in the gospel of John.
 - ii. John 14:11 "Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me. Otherwise, believe because of the works themselves."
 - f. Jesus' mission was the preaching of the good news that the kingdom of God was at hand.
3. Which Jesus do we want?
- a. Here is a question we need to ask ourselves: which Jesus do we want? Are we lining up at the door, waiting in line for our miracles? Or are we coming to Jesus because he has brought the kingdom of God to us?
 - b. There is a lot of preaching and teaching out there that makes Jesus into our miracle man. But I don't think I would be outside the lines to say that a lot of those people lining up at the doorway in Capernaum never found the kingdom of God. We know this because we are told that at a certain point when the teachings got too hard many of the crowds turned away.
 - c. So where are we on this scale? Is Jesus the guy who does stuff for us? Once his blessings and miracles seem to dry up and we are left with nothing but his message, will it be too hard and we will turn away?
 - d. Or will we see his miracles for what he calls them, the evidence of the authority with which he taught? In the story of him casting out the demon in the synagogue, it was the casting out of the demon- the fact that demons obeyed him- that caused them to see the authority in his teaching.
 - e. In the healing of the paralytic that we will come to in the next few weeks, Jesus heals the paralytic with these words, "10 But so you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins," He told the paralytic, 11 "I tell you: get up, pick up your stretcher, and go home." (Mark 2:10, 11)
 - f. We need to want the Jesus who has the power to cast out demons and heal the lame because it is precisely that Jesus who has the power to forgive sins and bring us to the kingdom of God.
 - g. The message is the mission. We have to remember that in our own lives. We have to remember that as we want to share Jesus with others. So often people

advertise Jesus as the cure-all. "Hurting? Lonely? Try Jesus." But it was the preaching of the message of forgiveness of sins and access to the kingdom of God that motivated Jesus. And that has to be central to our beliefs and our mission.

- i. And He said to them, "Let's go on to the neighboring villages so that I may preach there too. This is why I have come."