

**THE UNIQUENESS OF JESUS' MINISTRY**

Mark 1:14-35

**Intro:** Up until the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ into the world, there never had been a ministry like His, nor has there ever been another like His. As John Mark began to review the life and ministry of our Lord, he seems to have been impressed with *the authority* of the Lord. We have that word in verse 22, and again in verse 27. It is the Greek word ἐξουσία. It is one of the Greek words for *power*, or *ability*. Thayer, in his Greek lexicon, gives as its first meaning “the power of *choice*, the liberty to do as one pleases. The people were used to their scribes and Pharisees who were very jealous of their authority. They expected everyone to submit to them and not to question *why*. But the Lord Jesus was neither a scribe or a Pharisee. But He had an authority which the people recognized, an authority of which He spoke on one of His last messages to His disciples found in Matthew 28:18-20. This is what the Lord said to them:

18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power [authority] is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Where did our Lord get His authority? Actually as the Son of God He had sovereign authority over all things, and yet as a Man He received His authority from the Father. This is what He was referring to in Matthew 11:25-27:

25 At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

26 Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.

27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

This was the question with which the scribes and Pharisees brought to the Lord throughout His ministry. You will find them asking it even when He was approaching the end of His ministry on earth. See Mark 11:27-28:

27 And they come again to Jerusalem: and as he was walking in the temple, there come to him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders,

28 And say unto him, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority to do these things?

According to the priests and scribes and elders, the Lord had no right to do what they were doing. They had worked hard to get the authority that they had, and they could not understand what right our Lord had to do what He was doing without getting His authority from them. The people, on the other hand, who heard the Lord from the very beginning of His ministry, recognized that He had authority, although they may not have understood where it came from.

When I decided years ago not to go on in my ministry with a certain denomination, some of my friends warned me that if I didn't stay with them, I would have nowhere to preach. Well, that was a long time ago, and I have never lacked a place to preach. The Lord came to earth as a Man, and His authority as a Man was given to Him by His Father. This was evident from the time of His baptism when the Father spoke from heaven. The Son of man needed no authority from men; His authority was from heaven, and from His heavenly Father. And our authority to preach the Word of God today does not come from any group of men. It comes from our Lord Himself. This does not mean that we should not seek the support and approval of the Lord's people, if they are guided by the Word in what they want to do, but our authority comes from the Lord.

Our text for this service begins with Mark 1:14, and goes down through verse 35.

The first evidence of our Lord's authority was seen in:

### **I. THE METHOD HE USED (Mark 1:14).**

It is seen in the words of this verse which tell us that after the imprisonment of John, our Lord "came . . . preaching." Our Lord was primarily a preacher. He did not come to reform society. He did not come to entertain the multitudes. He "came . . . preaching."

You find those words preaching and/or teaching all through the record of our Lord's ministry in the Gospels. On one occasion when the Lord was in the synagogue in Nazareth He was given a copy of the prophecy of

Isaiah, and He opened it to the place in Isaiah 61 and read where it was said of Him, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach.” See Luke 4:17, 18.

With all of the work that has to be done in the ministry of the church today, if we are not doing this primary work, we are not doing what the Lord wants us to do: to preach. We may have discussion groups, but our purpose in the discussion groups is not to decide what we are to believe in the Bible, or not believe. We are there to have some one lead us to a knowledge of the truth revealed in the Word.

And this leads me to my second point. What did our Lord preach? So let us talk about:

## **II. THE MESSAGE THAT HE PREACHED (Mark 1:14-15).**

He preached “the Gospel of the kingdom of God.” Many who believed in the Lord while He was here on earth thought that He had come to set up His kingdom on earth, would put down Rome, and reign over the nations of the earth. But that was not His purpose then. He is coming to do that at some future time, but “the gospel of the kingdom of God” is “the Gospel.” And that is evident from the fact that the Lord went on to say, “Repent, and believe the Gospel.”

Are we in the kingdom of God now? We had better be. We entered the kingdom of God by the new birth, according to the teaching that the Lord gave to Nicodemus. The Lord came preaching like John the Baptist preached; they preached repentance! Repentance has to do with sin. It has to do with sorrow over our sins, but, in addition, repentance means that by God’s grace we intend to forsake our sins, to turn away from our sins, and to turn to the Lord to do His will. And in order to repent we need to believe the Gospel, believe the good news that Christ came to die for sinners, to seek and to save lost sinners.

This is our mission. And we are under both a divine obligation and divine authority to proclaim this message. Cf. Paul charge to Timothy in 1 Tim. 4:1 ff.

The third thing that Mark mentioned about the Lord in the exercise of His authority was seen in:

### **III. THE MEN HE CHOSE TO FOLLOW HIM (Mark 1:16-20).**

We just have the first four men that the Lord chose here, but they were certainly representative of the rest. He chose four fishermen. They were not prominent. They were not leaders. They were not scholars. They were fishermen.

What contact the Lord had had with them before, we do not know, but what we do see here is the exercise of the Lord's authority. Look at these verses. The Lord called, and they came. Neither business nor family stood in the way. The call of God was upon these men, and they came. This is always true. When the Lord calls, people come. They drop whatever they are doing, and they come. Another word for authority is sovereignty.

Cf. 1 Cor. 1:26-31. The Lord does not call us because of what we are in ourselves, but in order that we might become instruments in His hands to do His will and to bring glory to God. Even a highly gifted person, or a very influential person, has no right to glory in anyone or anything but in God Who uses us for His glory.

But then we see the Lord in the synagogue in Capernaum.

### **IV. THE PREACHING OF THE LORD (Mark 1:21-22).**

The Jews who were in the synagogue on that day never heard preaching like they heard then. There was power in the Lord's preaching which was teaching. If we are not teaching when we preach, then we are not really preaching. The Lord taught the truth, just as we are to teach the Word. And there is power in the Word, convicting power, convincing power, and redeeming power. We know from what is said about the teaching of the scribes and Pharisees that they taught as the truth, the doctrines of men. The people did not know the difference between the Word of God as compared with the traditions of the elders, until they heard the teaching of the Lord Jesus. The Word of God carries its own power. Cf. Heb. 4:12. It may not be what people want to hear, but it is what they need to hear, and it is what God and the Lord Jesus want us to preach. And when we do, the Spirit of God honors it, people are blessed, and there are those who believe and are saved. It may not all happen at once, but there is never a true experience of salvation but what the Word of God has been involved in it. Don't do as seeker pastors do today, seek to draw people

in by music, and stories. Our commission from our Lord is to preach the Word. Begin with the Word, and then you will be able to hang on to them with the Word. Even when people don't want it, give it to them anyway. God will use it.

As we come to verse 23, we come to the kind of a situation that the Lord faced all through His ministry as He faced some of the fruits of sin – demon-possession and physical illness.

#### **V. THE HEALING MINISTRY OF OUR LORD (Mark 1:23-34).**

There had been many miracles performed prior to our Lord's coming to the earth, and for a time His apostles performed miracles after the Lord went back to heaven, *but at no time and by no one were so many miracles performed as those which the Lord performed while He was here on earth. And the Apostle John in his Gospel tells us that the Lord performed miracles as evidence of His Deity.* Cf. John 20:30-31. We don't know how many He performed, but they were many. But they were never done to attract a crowd. They were always done to meet the many needs of the people in those days.

But one thing that was very significant in our Lord's ministry was the number of demon-possessed people who were delivered. And it seems that the Devil (and there is only one Devil) had turned out in force to destroy people and to destroy the Lord, if possible. And yet the Lord delivered people who were demon-possessed most often with just a word. So the authority that the Father had given Him extended to the world of Satan's power as well. And yet the deliverance of a demon-possessed person was minor compared with what it takes for the salvation of a single sinner.

Finally, we have in verse 35 a wonderful picture of:

#### **VI. THE FELLOWSHIP BETWEEN THE FATHER AND THE SON (Mark 1:35).**