

Series: Jesus, At Night #1666

Title: Mark 1

Jesus' Authority, The People's Amazement

Thank you for joining me today from wherever you are and by however you listen as we meet together coast-to-coast here in the United States and all the way around the world. Welcome back. Last time we began our series with the title *Jesus, At Night*. In the Spirit of Mark's Gospel we will be moving swiftly through a few scenes in the life of Jesus Christ in which He lived His perfect life in the nighttime. Today we will be in Mark chapter 1. If you have your Bible handy, turn to Mark 1. Part of this chapter describes a long, busy, and what must have been tiring day in the life of Christ. This was a Sabbath Day, a Saturday. Let me read Mark 1, verse 21. **"They went into Capernaum; and immediately on the Sabbath [Jesus] entered the synagogue and began to teach."**

This was how the day began. "They" refers to the disciples whom Jesus has commanded to follow Him. They obeyed. You can read about this in the preceding verses 16-20 of Mark 1. These are two sets of brothers, all successful fishermen and businessmen, Simon and Andrew and James and John. So the four of them, plus Jesus, enter Capernaum. Located along the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee Capernaum was a prosperous fishing center and the base of operations for the fishing business the disciples just left to follow Christ. Matthew worked as a tax collector there. And Capernaum also became the headquarters of Jesus' Galilean ministry.

By way of an overview, immediately the following happens. Jesus teaches in the synagogue (verses 21 and 22), Jesus cleanses the man of the unclean spirit (verses 23-28), then the scene shifts to close by the synagogue and the home of Simon and Andrew when the Lord heals Simon's mother-in-law (his wife's mother) of a debilitating fever (verses 29-31). And then in verse 32 the text says, **"When evening came, after the sun had set..."** And this is our text, which I will comment on in a moment. In verse 34 this day ends in what must have been the middle of the night, because it is **"in the early morning"** when Jesus rises to pray (verse 35). Let me encourage you to read all of this for yourself, Mark's Gospel chapter 1, verses 21-39.

For me, there are two words that stand out in these verses. One is the word authority. And the other is the word amazement. Authority, as in Jesus' authority to teach, to heal, and to cleanse a man of the unclean, outspoken and raging spirit. And amazement, as in the response of the people in Capernaum to Jesus' ministry that day. Let me give you a taste for this by reading verses 21 and 22, **"They went into Capernaum; and immediately on the Sabbath He entered the synagogue and began to teach. ²² They were amazed at His teaching; for [Jesus] was teaching them as one having authority, and not as the scribes."** And then in verse 27 after Jesus exercises His divine authority over the demon. **"They were all amazed, so that they debated among themselves, saying, 'What is this? A new teaching with authority!'"**

And in verses 32-35 we find Christ's authority and the crowd's amazement again. Listen and follow along as I read verses 32-35, **"When evening came, after the sun had set, they began bringing to [Jesus] all who were ill and those who were demon-possessed. ³³ And the whole city had gathered at the door. ³⁴ And He healed many who were ill with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and [Jesus] was not permitting the demons to speak, because they knew who He was. ³⁵ In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there."**

This is a remarkable scene. Jesus is still at Simon and Andrew's home in Capernaum and, after hearing about what Jesus said and did in the synagogue and the healing of this woman – with amazement, commenting on Christ's authority – news spread like wildfire through the city that the Lord was overnighting there. Because it was a Sabbath day they were not permitted by Jewish rabbinic law to carry anyone or anything on that day, and so notice they waited until evening and the sun had set and then, wow, so many ill and demon possessed people were brought to Jesus that, verse 33, "The whole city had gathered at the door."

So here is our Lord, in the dark (with the sun setting around 6PM) and He was healing all the people who were ill with various diseases and He was casting out many demons. Jesus continues to use His all-powerful authority! In Luke's account of this same episode, Luke 4, verse 40, he says, "**[Jesus was] laying His hands on each one of them, He was healing them.**" This was hands-on ministry. We should be careful with Mark's statement that "He healed many." You might think that means Jesus did not heal everyone, but rather it means that of the many who came all were healed. In Matthew's account, Matthew 8.16, he says Jesus, "**healed all who were ill.**"

And Jesus is casting out demons and not permitting them to speak. They certainly knew who He was, because demons are fallen angels and Jesus is the One in the Trinity who created the angels! In His earthly ministry Jesus did not want affirmation of His identity from these Satanic forces and so, as you will see repeatedly in reading the Gospels, Christ commands them to be silent.

Regarding this powerful night of authoritative healing, one commentator puts it this way, "Presumably hundreds of people were healed on this occasion. Yet, this was only one night in the life of our Lord. Jesus would continue to display this type of divine power throughout His three-year ministry. In fact, there are some ninety [9-0, 90] gospel texts that feature the healings of Christ. During Jesus' ministry, there was an unparalleled healing explosion that virtually banished disease from Israel. Nothing like it has ever occurred, in all the centuries before Jesus' earthly ministry or since (*The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, Mark 1-8, 76*)." End quote. That's very true.

Here is Jesus the Healer, healing of all illnesses and diseases and all demonic possession. He healed instantly and completely. And He did this, validating His claim to be The Messiah, all throughout His ministry, including in the pitch black darkness of night.

What a day and night! We have the teaching in the synagogue. As anyone who has spent even part of a day teaching knows, this is very tiring, fatiguing. On top of this Jesus immediately cleanses the man of the demon. Then, immediately, heals Simon Peter's mother-in-law of a deadly fever. Then, at dusk and well into the same evening, in fact, with just a enough time for a few hours of sleep, Jesus healed every single person of illness and cast out all the demons who possessed those people. Talk about exhausting! And we wonder, "Where did this one Man, albeit the Son of God, where did Jesus get the strength to do all this?" I will tell you, listen to verse 35, "In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left *the house*, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there."

"Jesus got up" indicates he was lying down, catching maybe a few hours' sleep. After all that our Lord packed into the day before now He is up before dawn of the next day. He leaves Simon and Andrew's house and He finds a secluded place, by definition of the Greek word used here, a wilderness place, and He communes with His Father in heaven. Jesus got His power from His prayers. Jesus, fully and truly Man, He prioritized prayer. He found the time and the place where He could be all alone and He enjoyed fellowship with His Father before the day began. A day, mind you, in which there will be more preaching and healing and casting out demons. Verse 39 of Mark 1, "**And [Jesus] went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out the demons.**"

Here, at night, we see Jesus' authority. The Greek word is *exousia*. It means power, dominion, and the right to rule. And as a result of the exercising of His authority we see the amazement of the people in Capernaum. The Greek word for amazed is *ekplesso*. It means astonishment, to strike with panic, to amaze. Are you amazed at who Jesus is, and His ministry among *you*? Are *you* in need of healing? Have you gone to Him and asked Him to heal you? He is *the only One* who can heal. No person alive today has the power to heal anyone. *Only God can heal*, despite what you might believe and/or hear on this radio station, on TV, and online. Does someone you know and love need to be healed? Have *you* prayed to Jesus for *their* healing? I hope you will be inspired and instructed by this true story of Jesus at night.

Next time, Lord willing, we are going to move along in the Gospels to meet up with Jesus as He again does something miraculous. Be with us and invite a friend to join you as we continue to discover who God Is!

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