

Authority of the Cross

Mark 1:21-28

Introduction

Here we have another **EPIPHANY** story about Jesus. He is shown to be the Son of God, not by the confession of the demon, for Christ silenced him. But we see Jesus shown to be the Son of God by His authority. That's what we're going to look at today when we look at this story.

Jesus' Unusual Authority

Throughout the **Gospel of Mark**, we are shown the awe that Jesus inspired by His words and deeds. Mark uses 6 different words to communicate wonder and awe at Jesus' teaching and actions. He illustrates this sense of wonder some 22 times in his book. Jesus wasn't the only one teaching, nor was He the only one performing miracles. It was the authority with which He did these things that set Him apart.

He Teaches with Authority

Mark doesn't tell us here what the content of Jesus' teaching was on that particular day. But we can infer what it was primarily about and what set it apart. In **verse 15**, Mark tells us what the overall summary of Jesus' message was: *"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel"* (**Mark 1:15**). In our story, Jesus is compared to the scribes. They knew the Law well and taught it. If we look at the **SERMON ON THE MOUNT** in **Matthew 5—7**, we see how Jesus taught about the Law. *"You have heard it said ... but I say to you ..."* Jesus always interpreted the Law with the Gospel. God's kingdom had come with His Son and His Son taught with the authority of God.

Authority Over Demons, the Devil, and Death

When Jesus casts out the demon, we're meant to see this as a struggle between life and death. Jesus is the Author of Life, and as such, has authority over life. Having authority over life means He also has authority over death. Since the devil, the prince of this world is also the prince of death, Jesus has authority over him and his minions. So, He is able to cast out the demon with a word: *"Be silent, and come out of him!"* (**Mark 1:25**).

Authority Over Sin

Because Jesus has the authority over the devil and his demons, we can infer that He has authority over sin (Read **Mark 2:5-12**). In this story of the paralytic, we see that Jesus has the authority to forgive sins and no one has that authority except God.

He Came to Save

This authority over sin points to the reason the Son of God came to earth—He came to save. This is where we see the authority of Jesus at its highest.

Salvation is Accomplished on the Cross

When Jesus died on the cross, He took our sins upon Himself, as the Apostle Paul tells us in **2 Corinthians 5:21**: *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might*

become the righteousness of God. He exchanged His righteousness for our sinfulness on the cross. It's on the cross that salvation is accomplished.

Death Is Defeated on the Cross

In **John 11**, we read: *[Jesus said,] "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die" (John 11:25-26).* When Jesus takes away sin, He also takes away the penalty of sin, death. *For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God (Romans 6:10).* We live because Jesus conquered death by dying on the cross.

The Devil Is Defeated on the Cross

In **Genesis 3:15**, God promises to send a *seed of the woman* to *crush Satan's head*, while Satan is *bruising His heel*. When Jesus was suffering what looked like a humiliating defeat on the cross, He was actually conquering Satan once and for all. Some have likened that day to D-Day in WWII. For all intents and purposes, the Nazis were defeated that day. Even though it was 11 months before they surrendered, their defeat was a foregone conclusion. The devil hasn't admitted defeat yet, but He has been defeated on the cross.

Christ's Authority Is the Authority of the Cross

So, we see that Jesus is shown to be the Son of God by His authority, His authority over sin, death, and the devil. But this authority reaches its climax on the cross. The Epiphany of the Son of God points to the cross. When we receive His broken body and shed blood, we are celebrating the authority that was fulfilled on the cross, the authority of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the **AUTHORITY OF THE CROSS**.

*And the peace of God,
Which passes all understanding,
Will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*
