

## Mark 1:32-45 The Authority and the Ability of Jesus Christ

All right, we are attempting to finish up the first chapter of the Gospel of Mark today, focusing on verses 32 through 45. Mark chapter 1 verses 32 through 45. We are in the first main section of Mark, beginning back in verse 14 of chapter 1 going all the way through to the end of chapter 9 at verse 50. This section is called The Presentation of the Servant in Galilee. The Lord's ministry there. Mark has emphasized to us the authority of Jesus, the authority of Jesus Christ.

We saw in verses 16 through 20 the calling of the four disciples. Jesus came upon them and said, **Come behind Me, come after Me**, and they left their fishing business. They left their father not knowing where they were going, how they were going to make it, what they were going to do for a living. They just followed behind Jesus because Jesus said, **Come behind Me**. That is always the right position - to follow Jesus Christ. Not alongside of Him, not in front of Him, but behind Him, following His lead.

Then we saw last week the commanding of unclean spirits. We saw Jesus teaching in the temple in verses 21 through 28. And there was a man there with an unclean spirit; which basically is a demonic spirit that causes people to do unclean and unholy things. So he had an unclean spirit, **And the spirit screamed out, "Eah, what do we have to do with You, Jesus, Nazarene? Did You come to destroy us? I know You, who You are, the Holy *One* of God."** Interesting expressions, but the one that we focused on the most was the demon's confession as to the truth of who Jesus is: **I know You, who You are, the Holy *One* of God**. Demons know Jesus.

We will see that again today, the demons know who Jesus is. They have known from the beginning because they were up in heaven with the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit prior to the earth being created. So they have known Him, and they have known all about Him, and they know and believe the truth. James chapter 2 verse 19 says, **You believe that there is one God, (or, *that God is one*). You do well. But even the demons are believing and trembling!** So it is interesting that Jesus has the authority over the demons. They know they have to obey. It is interesting they obeyed Him.

**And Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out from him. And the unclean spirit convulsed him, and having cried out *with a great voice*, came out of him.** The demons have to obey Jesus. He has the authority over the demonic and satanic realm. That is something the believers need to understand today, is that the demons are subject to Jesus, and they must obey Him. And Satan only has freedom to do what he gets permission to do from God. You can read that in Job chapters 1 and 2.

So the unclean spirit came out. **And all were astonished, and questioned therefore, saying, "What is this? What is this new teaching, that He according to authority even commands the unclean spirits, and they obey Him?"** Who is this man? Who is this Jesus that if you belong to Him - notice what I am saying. The Bible says if you belong to Him you have already overcome the evil spirits, because greater is He that is in you than He that is in the world.

Satan and his demons can harass us, but they cannot possess a believer. They can only harass and we look to Jesus as the authority. Because Satan rattles our flesh, we cry out for deliverance. But in reality Satan cannot penetrate our spirit. He has access to the flesh. He has access to the world. **And the fame of Jesus went out immediately into the whole region of Galilee.**

Then we saw in verses of 29 through 31, the curing of Peter's mother-in-Law. Remember they are in Capernaum and Jesus is staying at Peter's house, with Peter's wife and possibly child, but also Peter's brother Andrew. And James and John were also with them, remember. And Jesus made His headquarters out of Peter's home in Capernaum. But when they left the synagogue area after casting out the unclean spirit, they came back to Peter's house and Peter's mother-in-law was sick, burning up with fever. And they told Him about her. And He went over and grabbed her by the hand and pulled her up. And the moment that He did that, immediately the fever left and she was made whole. That is the kind of authority that Jesus has. He did not say that He is going to do this for every single person, but as we will see today, these are all signs that Jesus has given and that the Holy Spirit continues to give today. These are signs as to who Jesus is. What He will do physically is a sign of what Jesus does spiritually. We will see that later on.

For today Mark chapter 1 verses 32 through 34, the crowd comes for healing. Now remember that we are still at Peter's house. And verse 32 says, **Now when evening had come, when the sun went down, they were bringing to Him all the ones having sickness, and the ones being demon possessed.** Literally translated *demonized*, it is one word that has to do with demon possession. These are people who are being destroyed by demonic spirits, and they are being brought to Him.

Now the emphasis of the text is to show that the worst of human conditions, a demonized person is a person who is totally taken over by a demon, at least one, they have no free will of their own. Even the demon speaks for them. Now if you think we have problems and that Satan gives us a bad time, just think what it would be like to be in a position where Satan totally takes over your life and is inside of you, and completely possesses you to the point where you have no free will of your own. In fact, you do not even speak for yourself, the demons speak for you. That is a pretty tough life, to be tormented and taken over by demons.

A Christian, a born-again believer, cannot be possessed by a demon because we are possessed by the Holy Spirit. The demons and Satan cannot penetrate my spirit. They do not have access to my soul. That is why Jesus comes to live inside. That is why it says we are sealed by the Holy Spirit and filled with the Holy Spirit. Demons cannot penetrate. They have access to my flesh or the physical world around me with God's permission, again reference Job chapters 1 and 2, but they cannot possess a believer.

But there are people who are possessed, sometimes by multiple demons, and Jesus has authority over the demons. So they were bringing to Him people who were demon possessed and who were sick with various diseases. Verse 33, **And the whole city had gathered together at the door.** This is at Peter's house. Verse 34, **And He healed many having sickness of various diseases, and He cast out many demons, and He was not allowing the demons to speak, because they had known Him.** He would not let the demons confess to the truth about

who He is. **Because they had known Him.** They have known Him since the beginning of creation, when they were in heaven before they were kicked out, before they rebelled and went with Satan, they knew Jesus. They knew the Christ.

In the gospel John chapter 5 verse 34 Jesus said, **I do not receive testimony from man.** Interesting. He says, **I do not receive testimony from man.** He does not receive testimony from demons. Neither one glorifies Him. Me in my flesh, I cannot give testimony for Jesus. We all try. And a lot of times we are in the flesh. He does not need us to testify concerning Him. It is God's Spirit that glorifies Jesus Christ through His people. It is God's Spirit that gives testimony through us to the people.

So the message of His ministry - just those brief few verses that we have read, Mark presents the fact that he has already shown that Jesus has authority over demons and disease but that His message is to set people free. That is the message.

In Luke chapter 4 verses 16 through 21 it records that Jesus, when He came into Nazareth He went into the synagogue. And picked up the scroll of Isaiah, where it says, **"The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, In order that I might preach the gospel to the poor; And I might heal the broken-hearted, and that I might heal those who are oppressed, and that I might set the captives free, and that I might proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."** And when He was finished, He rolled up the scroll, and He went and sat down. And all the eyes were upon Him. And He said, **"This day is the Scripture is fulfilled in your ears."**

When Jesus came and He healed the sick, when He cast out the demons, He was setting people free. He was bringing the message of His ministry. He was not trying to set up some kind of tent meeting or church or some kind of movement, as we will see in a moment. He came with the message, the good news of Jesus Christ is that He came to set people free. He came to set them free from Satan's hold on their lives. So if you have received Christ, you have been set free from Satan's hold on your life.

Then in Mark chapter 1 verses 35 to 39 we have the change of location. We read verse 35, **And having risen up early in the night He went out, and departed into a desert place, and there He was praying.** So He was alone and He was seeking to be alone. And so Peter and the others came to look for Him. Look at verse 36, **And Simon and the ones with him eagerly searched for Him.** Where did He go? He left. Left us behind. But Jesus was just looking to be alone to pray. Verse 37, **And having found Him and they say to Him that, "All are seeking for You."** Everybody is looking for You. Nobody knows where to find You. Of course, that is the whole purpose of it all, for Him to be alone. Verse 38, **And He says to them (in response), "We should go elsewhere into the next villages, in order that there also I might preach; for I have come out for this reason."** He came to preach the gospel, the good news. Not to set up some kind of movement as I just said. He was moving from village to village manifesting His power, His authority over demons and disease in order to set people free. So He said to them, in other words, He says, too many people are gathering, a crowd is forming. Just like the Gospel of Matthew, Mark's gospel will emphasize to us that when Jesus started attracting a lot of people because of the miracles that He did, He left. It was not His motive to form a following so that people would live off of His miracles and have nothing to do with Him by faith and spiritually

speaking. And Jesus refused to be made a king by the world. He refused to be made a king by the world.

Then we have Mark chapter 1 verses 40 through 45, the curing of the leper. **And a leper comes to Him, begging Him and kneeling down to Him, and saying to Him that, "If You should will, You are able to cleanse me."** Notice the literal translation: **if You should will, You are able to cleanse me;** emphasis on *able*. That means *ability* or *capacity*. The leper is confessing that Jesus has the power and authority to cleanse him. Notice he said *cleanse*; not heal, but cleanse.

Now leprosy is a skin disease. The word *leprosy* is from the Greek word **λεπρός** (lepros), which means *scale* and refers to the scaly appearance of the leper's skin. This disease starts as a tumor on the surface of the skin, and then becomes systemic going down into the nervous system and into the muscles, to the point that people will lose feeling in those areas. And their body begins to decay to the point that they can even have an arm fall off one day just because it rots, and just falls off and they would not even notice unless they actually saw it happen, because they cannot feel it. It is a terrible disease.

Now God in Leviticus chapters 13 and 14 presented this disease to the Jews as being an illustration or example of sin. It is important to see. That is why the leper says, "You can cleanse me," instead of, "You can heal me," because to the Jews leprosy was a disease example of what sin is. You cannot be healed from sin. You need Jesus, you need God to perform a miracle to forgive you of your sins. You cannot get yourself forgiven by works.

In order for a leper to go back into society he had to come to the priest. The priest had to check him out. Then he would have him make a sacrifice for his sin and be isolated for one week, and then offer another sacrifice before the priest could allow him back into society.

But nobody was ever healed of leprosy. Two people in the Old Testament were healed of leprosy - that was an act of God, but nobody had ever been healed. You had to go over in the colony with the with all the other lepers and stay away from the people. If he came within fifty feet of people he had to yell out, "Unclean, unclean," so that people would know to get out of the way. If he was walking towards people on a windy day he had to call out, "Unclean, unclean," from one-hundred fifty feet away, so that he would warn them and would not come near them and touch them. They believed that the only way a leper could be cleansed or healed is by a miracle from God because nobody was ever cleansed.

This leper comes into a public forum, and it is surprising that he would even be in public. And he came up to talk to Jesus, but notice what he literally said again, **"If it should be Your will,"** what an act of submission. This is the great principle that we have been hammering home for years, especially highlighted in our study about prayer a couple weeks ago.

In I John chapter 5 verses 14 and 15 John says, **We have this confidence that the Lord hears our prayers if we ask anything according to His will.** He goes on, verse 15 says, **And if we have confidence that He hears us because we are asking according to His will then we have the answer, we have the petitions that we have requested from Him.** Prayer is the

means by which we express our submission to the Lord and His will. He has a will. He has a plan for every situation. So prayer is asking for the Lord's will to be done and then receiving whatever happens, or whatever is, as His answer. That is why people have changed prayer over the years and said, "We cannot accept God's answer for our prayers. In fact, we prayed for things and things got worse when we asked for the Lord's will to be done. So what God wants us to do is He wants us to take control of our own life and through prayer, and through prayer formula, and in the name of Jesus claim what you want to have happen, that is what God wants." That is what they say. But it never happens. Or if it does happen it is because it was the Lord's will, not because of what they prayed. But it does not work. That is not what prayer is for.

So as an act of submission the leper says, **If it should be Your will.** So, "I am telling you Jesus that You have the ability to cleanse me." *Ability or capacity.* He is confessing the truth to Jesus, "You have the ability to cleanse me if it should be Your will." But interesting, he is leaving it up to the Lord, *if it is His will.* What submission is that. But you see the kind of worship he gave? He did not even ask, he just said, "You have the ability to cleanse me if it should be in Your will." He did not claim it. He did not demand it. What he did was he told the Lord, "You have the ability to heal me or cleanse me if You want, if it is Your will."

So it says in verse 41, **And Jesus having been moved with compassion, having stretched out His hand, He touched him, interesting, and says to him, "I will, be cleansed!"** That is a command. And it says in verse 42, **And when He spoke, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.** Immediately the leprosy left him. That is important - that his cleansing or healing happens immediately, because if it just clears up gradually over a couple of days people will say he got healed somewhere else. It happened instantaneous. It happened immediate. So immediately the leprosy left him.

Verse 43, **And having sternly warned him, immediately He sent him away.** So He gave him a warning and did not let him linger around talking with people. Immediately He sent him away.

This is what His instructions were, His warnings. He says to him, verse 44, **And says to him, "See you should tell no one one thing, but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer concerning your cleansing what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them."** Making reference to Leviticus chapters 13 and 14. What is the procedure? Go to the priest and tell him you want to go through the procedure to be pronounced clean through the system, the legal system in the Old Testament. So, do not tell anybody anything. Go directly to the priest and say, "I want you to get me through the process and procedures that Moses gave, so that I can go back into society. I am a leper, and I am cleansed."

But, you see, if the priest were to take him, check him out and okay him, and have him make sacrifice, set him aside for a week, keeping check on him, then as soon as the priest were to say, "You are clean, you are able to go back into society," that priest is verifying and validating the ministry of Christ. And Jesus did not want anybody to hear about it and did not want word to get out around that He did it. Because then the priest would find out about it before the man even got there and he would not want to have anything to do with it. So he wanted the man just to not talk to anybody, not one thing, which is hard for him to do. Because out of response you

want to run back and tell your family and show your family and your friends that Jesus healed you and cleansed you. You do not want to go back through the legal system but that is what Jesus wanted. And He did not want anybody to hear about it until the man was cleansed and pronounced clean, which would validate and verify the ministry of Jesus Christ.

Verse 45 says, **But having gone out he began to proclaim much, and to spread the matter, so that He no longer was able to enter openly into a city.** Jesus was not able to any longer go into the city openly. **But He was outside over desert places; and they were coming to Him from every direction.** All the cities were now sending multitudes of sick people and demonized people out. The Lord did not want an excitable crowd following Him. He did not want people coming to Him for the wrong reasons and the wrong motives. The Lord had a message that He came not to set up some kind of earthly movement. He came to truly set people free. True freedom from inside. Freedom from Satan. His motive for ministry was not just to heal everybody that came along or to provide for free lunches.

Interesting in the Gospel of John chapter 6 we see that Jesus fed the five thousand men, not counting women and children. He multiplied food out for about twenty thousand people. And that night He went over the sea to the other side of the sea and the multitude followed Him, and they said - and I am paraphrasing here, "Master when did You come over here? We were looking for you all over the place." And Jesus said, "You have not followed Me because you saw the sign, but because your stomachs were filled." They said, "What are You talking about?" He says, "Well, you see, **I am the Bread of Life. Except you eat of My flesh and drink of My blood you have no life in you.**" So basically they were saying, "You mean no free lunch? Is that what You are saying?" Jesus said, "When I multiplied that food out for you, it was a sign that I am the Bread of heaven that is come down. I am the Bread of Life for you, for your soul. Just as I provided that food for you when I multiplied that food for you." And they left Him because He would not give them any more free lunch. So He performed a miracle. And John says the miracles of Jesus are signs of what Jesus can do spiritually. And that once you see the sign, and you receive Jesus for what He has done and for who He is, then you live by faith, you feed off of Him, not off the physical food that He provides.

In closing, so Mark is presenting the authority and ability of Jesus Christ. When I get discouraged and I make the decision to quit because I do not think I can go on, or it is too hard. And Satan creates that in the physical realm around me and in my circumstances, when in reality I have got Christ in my heart. Who can stop me? Obviously Satan cannot stop me. We have to realize that.

When He went to the cross, He told the disciples before He went in John chapter 16 verse 33, **In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world.** Jesus said, **I have already overcome the world.** He defeated Satan at the cross. He has authority over demons. Satan does not have authority over us, and he cannot take authority over us. This is something that we need to realize.

Paul says, "Concentrate on strengthening the inner man where Christ dwells," developing that relationship so that no matter what you do during the day you are always turning inward where Christ dwells.

And the deception today is that we think that we have to fight with Satan. There are people that just fight with Satan all day long. Paul says in Ephesians chapter 6 verse 13, **Put on the whole armor of God in order that you might resist him.** The armor being Jesus Christ. So he says, **Put on the whole armor of God.** It is a one-time put on. Once you receive Christ you have God's armor on. You do not keep putting the pieces of armor on. **In order to resist Satan,** because he has already been defeated. There are many Christians today, many thousands of Christians, that are busy all day long fighting demons and fighting Satan all because they are being harassed and their flesh does not like it. Or else they do not belong to Christ and they have to fight with Satan because they are not free. Free to live the victorious Christian life because Christ is within. You know we have already been set free. They can harass us, but they cannot stop us, those demons.

I will close with I John chapter 4 verse 4 where John says, **There many spirits of antichrist in the world, but we have overcome them.** He uses a verb tense to say it is already done. **We have overcome the spirit of antichrist that is in the world, because greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.** We keep looking to the flesh, keep looking to the world for help, but in reality it comes from Christ who dwells within. Like I said earlier, we are filled with His Spirit and we are sealed by His Spirit. So Satan cannot touch us. He can harass us, and take our attention off of Christ, and get us distracted, but he cannot have us. He can only make us think that we have to fight him, but in reality he has been defeated. And we have the armor of God that protects us from ever being taken away from Christ.

Let's close with prayer.