

OUT AND ABOUT  
**Mark 1:21-45**

1. Jesus' Authority-

Jesus' public ministry establishes his authority over the highest authorities in both the temporal realm, as represented by the scribes, and the supernatural authorities, as represented by the demon

v. 21. And they went [Jesus and His Disciples] into Capernaum; and immediately on the Sabbath He entered the synagogue and began to teach.

v. 22. And they were astonished at His teaching; for He was teaching them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes.

~“Scribe” thus combined the offices of Torah professor, teacher and moralist, and civil lawyer, in that order. The first seats in the synagogues were reserved for scribes, and people rose to their feet when they entered a room.

The scribes derive their authority from the “tradition of the elders”—the fathers of Judaism, we might say; whereas Jesus receives his authority directly from the Father in heaven.

v. 23. And immediately there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,

~[God goes head-to-head with its unseen though ultimate opponent, the power structure of evil. **(Ephesians 6:12)**

~The exorcism passages all speak of the demon as an active personality, distinct from the ‘host’, and controlling the behavior of the latter.

~The exorcisms in Mark depict the gripping conflict between the kingdom of God and the dominion of Satan, between the one anointed with God's Spirit and those held captive by unclean spirits. The inbreaking of God's kingdom is Jesus' first order of business and begins, according to Mark, not in the human arena but in the cosmic arena, in order to bind the “strong man” **(Mark 3:27)**

~The first clash with Satan's minions following the temptation is a no-contest event. The strong Son of God prevails over evil and “binds the strong man”

v. 24. saying, “What do we have to do with You, Jesus the Nazarene? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!”

v. 25. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be quiet, and come out of him!”

v. 26. And throwing him into convulsions, the unclean spirit cried out with a loud voice and came out of him.

~ Not only are unclean spirits expelled, but broken people are restored to health and wholeness and to the possibility of restoration with their Creator, in whose image they are made. The *power* of Jesus is astonishing not as a display of Jesus’ grandeur but as a power of redemption for captives.

v. 27. And they were all amazed, so that they were arguing among themselves, saying, “What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him.”

v. 28. And immediately the news about Him spread everywhere into all the surrounding district of Galilee.

## 2. Simon’s Mother-In-Law and Many Others Healed.

The inclusion of this humble miracle, and its subsequent multiplication among “the whole town” (1:33) and “throughout Galilee” (1:39), asserts Jesus’ solidarity and engagement with common people and common needs.

v. 29. And immediately after they came out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

v. 30. Now Simon’s mother-in-law was lying sick with a fever; and immediately they spoke to Jesus about her.

v. 31. And He came to her and raised her up, taking her by the hand, and the fever left her, and she *began* waiting on them.

~The healing depends solely on Jesus, whose personal touch and compassion restore the ailing woman to health.

~ Notice her service of thanksgiving (**Mark 10:45**)

v. 32. Now when evening came, after the sun had set, they *began* bringing to Him all who were ill and those who were demon-possessed.

v. 33. And the whole city had gathered at the door.

v. 34. And He healed many who were ill with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and He was not permitting the demons to speak, because they knew who He was. **Zechariah 13:2**

~Notice men will continue to struggle with identifying Jesus, the demons know exactly who He is!

~The “command to silence”. We will see it again in verse 44.

It was necessary for Jesus to silence messianic utterances about himself since these carried connotations of military deliverance.

It appears to derive from the profile of the Servant of the Lord to which Jesus consciously patterns his ministry. The Servant is defined by restraint and humbleness

The glory of the crown. The glory of the cross. (Luther)

“The Servant motif is assuredly a key to the question why God’s Son channels his authority and power in hiddenness. That which truly changes the human heart and ultimately compels one to recognize and follow Jesus can never come from coercion or a display of miraculous power. Jesus will have no allegiance exacted by amazement and astonishment. The faith of his disciples must be evoked through humility and ultimately through suffering. If one will not receive Jesus in this form, one will not receive Jesus in all his power and majesty.” ~James R. Edwards

### 3. Praying, Preaching, Healing

v. 35. And in the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus rose up, went out of *the house*, and went away to a desolate place, and was praying there.

~Jesus cannot extend himself outward in compassion without first attending to the source of his mission and purpose with the Father; and, conversely, his oneness with the Father compels him outward in mission.

v. 36. And Simon and his companions searched for Him;

v. 37. and they found Him, and said to Him, “Everyone is looking for You.”

Seeking” connotes an attempt to determine and control rather than to submit and follow. In this respect, seeking for Jesus is not a virtue in the Gospel of Mark. Nor are clamoring crowds a sign of success or aid to ministry. Here, as elsewhere in Mark, enthusiasm is not to be confused with faith; indeed, it can oppose faith.

v. 38. And He said to them, “Let us go elsewhere, to the towns nearby, so that I may preach there also; for that is what I came out for.”

v. 39. And He went, preaching in their synagogues throughout all Galilee and casting out the demons.

~ Jesus directs his ministry to practicing communities of faith in Judaism in fulfillment of an earlier history of revelation. His mission is defined and directed by the completion of God’s purpose for Israel. (**John 1:9-11; Romans 1:16**)

#### 4. A Leper Healed

Leprosy was then as now a subject of superstition and fear.

Leprosy is a skin disease, and like all skin diseases it is difficult to diagnose and heal.

Its conditions are discussed in Leviticus 13–14

In the OT leprosy was generally regarded as a divine punishment, the cure of which could only be effected by God

The dread of its contagion is reflected in the following passage: “The person with such an infectious disease must wear torn clothes, let his hair be unkempt, cover the lower part of his face and cry out, ‘Unclean! Unclean!’ As long as he has the infection he remains unclean. He must live alone; he must live outside the camp” (**Leviticus 13:45-46**)

The disease robbed them of their health, and the sentence imposed on them as a consequence robbed them of their name, occupation, habits, family and fellowship, and worshiping community

v. 40. And a leper came to Jesus, pleading with Him and falling on his knees before Him, and saying, “If You are willing, You can make me clean.”

His faith is revealed by the fact that he does not question Jesus’ *ability* to save him, only his *willingness* to save him. The leper’s longing is profoundly human, for it is not God’s ability that we doubt, but only his willingness—*if* he will do what we ask.

v. 41. And moved with compassion, He stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, "I am willing; be cleansed."

~Other illnesses had to be healed, but leprosy had to be *cleansed*.

Jesus is not polluted by the leper's disease; rather, the leper is cleansed and healed by Jesus' contagious holiness.

v. 42. And immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed.

v. 43. And He sternly warned him and immediately sent him away,

v. 44. and He said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

~This was the protocol prescribed for a cleansed leper. The fact that Jesus commanded the man to follow it reveals that he honored the Mosaic law

~Jesus is earnest and urgent about guarding the veil of his messianic identity to preserve it from misunderstanding and false responses

V 45. But he went out and began to proclaim it freely and to spread the news around, to such an extent that Jesus could no longer publicly enter a city, but stayed out in desolate areas; and they were coming to Him from everywhere.