

The King's Authority

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[0 : 00] Well, please open your Bible to the Gospel of Mark, chapter 1. The Gospel of Mark, chapter 1.

! Mark introduced Jesus.

In particular, we saw that Mark introduced Jesus as the promised King, the Divine Son, and as the last Adam and the true Israel.

Last week's sermon was entitled, Introducing the King, and this morning it's titled, The King's Authority, because the next aspect of the life of Jesus that Mark highlights for us is the authority of Jesus.

And as I did last week, I want to remind you again that the Gospel of Mark, like the other Gospels, are not just random collections of things in Jesus' life.

[1 : 12] It's not like a scrapbook, so to speak, where they put things together. Each one is a carefully crafted argument about who Jesus is.

And Mark's argument from the very outset of his Gospel is that Jesus is the Son of God who came into the world in divine fulfillment of God's redemptive plan.

And Mark presents his Gospel as evidence to prove the point. And then, in the end, he leaves it up to his readers and his hearers, and essentially says to them, What do you say?

Having heard the evidence, having read the evidence, what do you say? Who is this man? And the truth is, those who faithfully read and faithfully hear Mark's Gospel can come to no other conclusion than he is the Son of God.

Jesus is the Son of God. And so this morning we pick up where we left off last week in Mark chapter 1, verse 14, and we'll be reading through to verse 28.

[2 : 22] Please follow along as I read Mark chapter 1, starting in verse 14. Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee proclaiming the Gospel of God and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand.

Repent and believe in the Gospel. Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew, the brother of Simon, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen.

And Jesus said to them, Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men. And immediately they left their nets and followed him.

And going on a little farther, he saw James, the son of Zebedee, and John, his brother, who were in their boat, mending the nets. And immediately he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and followed him.

And they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath he entered the synagogue and was teaching. And they were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes.

[3 : 43] And immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth?

Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God. But Jesus rebuked him, saying, Be silent, and come out of him.

And the unclean spirit convulsing him and crying out with a loud voice came out of him. And they were all amazed. So they questioned among themselves, saying, What is this?

A new teaching with authority? He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him. And at once, his fame spread everywhere, throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee.

Let's pray. Father, thank you for your word this morning. Would you grant to us the presence of mind to hear, and the hearts to obey.

[4 : 56] Lord, once again, I ask for your help, that you would help me to be faithful, to proclaim the truth of your word to your people this morning.

Speak to our hearts, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen. If you're using the English Standard Version as I am, you would probably notice that the text that we just read is divided into three parts.

Right at the beginning, sorry, the three parts that you will see, if you have an English Standard Version, is Jesus beginning his ministry, Jesus calling his first disciples, and then Jesus in the synagogue.

Other translations may use different words, but I think generally, they divide the passage into three parts. And as you consider these three events, as you look at them and see what stands out in them, I believe that what you would see as the common trait in these three sections of the passage we just read, is that Jesus possessed unusual authority.

He possessed what we may even call unique authority. And so right at the beginning of the ministry of Jesus, remember John just introduced Jesus, now he gets into the ministry of Jesus, and the first thing he highlights for us is the authority that Jesus had.

[6 : 33] Mark is showing us that Jesus possessed divine authority. He possessed the authority of God. And so this morning, as we consider this section of Mark's Gospel, here's what I want us to consider.

I want us to consider this question. How does Jesus demonstrate divine authority? When we look at this section that we just read, the question is that we want to consider, how does Jesus demonstrate divine authority, your God's authority?

How does he do that? I want to encourage you, if you have questions, as we're moving through the sermon, make a note of them. You're going to have a time at the end to ask those questions.

But the first way that Jesus demonstrated that he possessed divine authority is by commanding repentance. Jesus commanded repentance.

Now, let me say right up front that this first point is going to be my longest point. So don't gauge the sermon from this first point. Because if you do, you may regret that you didn't bring lunch.

[7 : 50] But the other ones are short, but this one is the bulk of the sermon this morning. We see Jesus demonstrating divine authority by commanding repentance.

And we see it in verses 14 and 15. Notice in verse 14 that Mark transitions with these words. He transitions from introducing Jesus to getting into the ministry of Jesus with these words.

Now, after John was arrested, the arrest of John signified that John's ministry as the preparer of the way had come to a close. It signifies that on the stage of redemption drama, John's role had been completed.

He had pointed to the Messiah, pointed to the one who would take away the sin of the world, and now he's arrested and Jesus knows that's his cue now to start his ministry.

So when John is arrested, Jesus now begins to fulfill his role in redemption history. And Mark tells us that Jesus comes into Galilee and he is preaching or he is proclaiming the gospel of God.

[9 : 09] Now, it's quite interesting that Jesus began his ministry in Galilee. Galilee was not the ideal place to begin a ministry. If Jesus were to talk to the church marketers of his day, they would tell him, don't go to Galilee because Galilee was a place that was scorned.

It was an isolated place. It was a neglected place. It was a place that was overrun by Greek culture. And proper Jews did not consider Galilee to be a place for proper Jews.

But Matthew's gospel gives us a further insight into why Jesus began his ministry in Galilee. And in Matthew chapter 4, verses 12 through 17, which should be projected for you, we read these words. Now when he, meaning Jesus, heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. And leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum by the sea in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali.

So that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled. The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, the way of the sea beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, Galilee was symbolic and representative of the dark world into which Jesus had come.

[10 : 53] And Jesus was the great light that was shining forth, the great light that was dawning on those who had been living in darkness. And he brought those in that dark world what they needed to hear.

He brought to them what they needed to hear. He brought to them the good news of God. Now you remember, and you can actually notice it in verse 1, that when John opens his gospel, he refers to

the gospel of Jesus Christ.

But now in verse 14, he refers to the gospel of God. And it's important to see that he's not talking about two things. There's only one gospel, not two, but the one gospel is oftentimes referred to in different ways.

And we saw last week how gospel, this word gospel, really was not a religious word. It was a word that was used by governments, for example, to proclaim whatever is newsworthy.

It was a term to say, this proclamation everyone needs to hear. It's like the information that goes in the gazette. Important information. Official information.

[12 : 08] It is news that is to be published far and wide. And we all know that the world into which Jesus came was filled with needs.

All kinds of needs, all manner of needs. There were poor people and sick people, demon-possessed people. There were mentally ill people.

There was economic and political injustice. There was discrimination. There was all kinds of human exploitation. But despite all those needs, the very first thing we see Jesus doing when he begins his ministry is we see him preaching.

Preaching the gospel of God. Preaching the good news. And the fact that the first part of the ministry of Jesus was preaching should be a lesson to all of us.

It should be a lesson to us because if preaching was the first part of the ministry of Jesus, it should be the first and foremost part of our ministry as well.

[13 : 20] We should never allow anything to displace the primacy of preaching in our midst.

Because more than anything else, what a fallen world needs to hear is the good news of the gospel of God.

some people think that Jesus was callous when one of his disciples, Judas, felt that the precious ointment that was poured on Jesus' feet should have been sold for the poor.

And Jesus made the comment, he says, you'll always have the poor with you. Some people think Jesus was callous. But he wasn't callous. Jesus recognized that in a fallen world, you're going to have these human conditions.

But we don't give ourselves to those human conditions in a primary way because those conditions will remain. They will never change until Jesus returns. But our only hope until Jesus returns is the hope of the gospel.

And so we see Jesus coming into this needy world, in this dark world, and he's proclaiming the gospel, the good news. And not just being caught up in the needs of people.

[14 : 36] He met the needs of people, as we see, as he goes on in his ministry. But first and foremost, he brings to them the gospel of God. And what is the gospel of God that Jesus preached?

We find it in verse 15. The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel.

Now, what do these words mean? Well, these are a kind of shorthand for the gospel, and believe it or not, these words of Jesus take us back to Genesis chapter 3.

They take us back to Genesis chapter 3 where Adam, because of his rebellion, plunged the whole human race, including himself, into the abyss of sin. In the Garden of Eden, Adam declared his independence from God.

And he and his offspring began to live in God's world as God's creation, ignoring God. And the rebellion continues to this day.

[15 : 47] But on the day that Adam rebelled, God made a promise to Adam and Eve. He says, there's coming a day when the seed of the woman is going to crush the head of the serpent. He's going to crush Satan's head because Satan was the one who was behind Adam's rebellion.

And from that day on, over a period of thousands of years, we see God renewing and confirming this promise that he had made. This past week, my Bible reading transitioned from Exodus into Leviticus.

And in Leviticus, as many of you know, is just chapter after chapter about sacrifices and the kind of animal that you needed to offer for particular kinds of sin.

And you had to bring it to the priest and the priest would offer the sacrifices. All those sacrifices pointed to Christ. And they served to confirm this promise that God made back in the garden that one day he was going to bring a true high priest, Jesus Christ, who would offer himself eternally.

No longer would be needed the blood of bulls and goats, but he would make himself an eternal sacrifice for sin. And throughout the history of Israel, what God did was he not only sent, he not only had these priests who were reminding Israel of this future high priest who would be the eternal priest, but he also sent them prophets.

[17 : 24] He sent them prophets to lead them, sorry, to warn them and to guide them. And those prophets served to confirm God's promise that one day he was going to send the ultimate prophet, Jesus Christ, and he would perfectly warn and guide the people of God.

And God also gave them kings. And the kings were to lead them and judge them. And all those kings pointed to the fact that one day God will send the ultimate king, the king of kings, who would lead and judge his people.

That's what the entirety of the Old Testament was about. The whole Old Testament was in bulk this promise that God had given that things that happened in the garden were not going to stand forever, that he was going to redeem it.

He was going to restore what had happened in the garden. John the Baptist was the last Old Testament prophet. He was the last one to close the chapter on that aspect of God's redemptive plan.

And now that John was arrested, Jesus comes on the scene and what Jesus says is these words, the time is fulfilled. The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

[18 : 52] The time has come for mercy and forgiveness that has been promised in the Old Testament to be fulfilled. And Jesus was in essence saying to our fallen, rebellious world, you've turned your back on God, you've turned your back on his kingdom, you've lived your life for yourself, doing your own thing, going your own way, but now the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

You no longer need to live in the kingdom of rebellion and darkness under Satan's rule. The time has come. The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Brothers and sisters, this is a gracious offer.

This is an offer from a God who has been sinned against, who has been spurned. He's coming to those who rejected his rule and he's offering to them the privilege of coming back under his rule and under his government.

He's saying the time is fulfilled, the kingdom right now is at hand. Now this term kingdom of God is used in different ways in scripture, but the context that we see it being used in here, what it speaks to, it doesn't speak to the overarching kingdom of God over all things.

It doesn't speak to that. That never changed. That always was. When Satan tempted Adam in the garden and Adam fell and fell into sin and took the whole world into sin with him, the kingdom of God never changed.

[20 : 32] It still ruled over all. God was still king ultimately over everything, over Satan, over our rebellion, over the entirety of this world.

But something did change. Something did change. In a functional way, Adam ceased to live under the government and the rule of God.

The personal rule of God. And so when Jesus comes now and he says the kingdom of heaven is at hand, the kingdom of God is at hand, he's not talking about the overarching kingdom, he's talking about God's saving rule in the lives of men, women, boys, and girls.

He's saying that is now at hand for you. It's not here permanently yet. It's not here. It's only at hand because Jesus hadn't gone to the cross yet.

He would go in a short while and therefore it was at hand. It was in their reach. But that's the kingdom that he's saying is now at hand.

[21 : 43] That kingdom is available to you, that you would come under the lordship of Jesus Christ and you will seek to live for him and serve him and glorify him in all that you do.

And see, this is why the Bible speaks about salvation in the way that it does. For example, in Colossians chapter 1, verse 13, here's what Paul writes.

He, meaning God, has delivered us from the domain or the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

So when we come to Christ, we are translated as the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of Jesus Christ, the kingdom of his dear son, the rule of Jesus.

But even when we are outside of the rule of Jesus, we are not serving him, not living for him, we are still under his overarching kingdom. The overarching kingdom is still there.

[22 : 50] So what Jesus was offering to the world, what Jesus was saying was at hand, was this functional redemptive kingdom, this rule of God governing our lives, that we are living for him, that we are serving him, and though every single person in the world is in the grand overarching kingdom of God, only those who are submitted to Jesus Christ are in the kingdom of his saving rule, living for him.

And so if you want to think of it this way, there's a kind of dual citizenship, or dual existence, I should say, not citizenship, that's a bad word, a dual existence. Everyone and everything, including Satan, is under the overarching universal kingdom of God.

As the psalmist says, God has established his kingdom in the heavens, his kingdom rules over everything, over darkness, over everything. But within that, there is a rule of God.

God, there is a rule of God where men, women, boys, and girls become subject to his rule, his government, his laws, and they live for him, they obey him, they do the opposite of what Adam did. They live for God in God's world, instead of rebelling against God in God's world. That is the kingdom that Jesus graciously offered as he began to preach.

[24 : 19] in light of this amazing announcement that God, who was rejected by rebels in his own world, had come to those rebels and made available to them entrance into the kingdom of God.

Jesus now says to them, in verse 15, repent and believe the gospel. Repent and believe the gospel. and actually he doesn't just say that, he commands that. He commands it. It is what we call the imperative. It is the command where he says, repent and believe in the good news.

Believe in the announcement that God's saving rule was at hand, that God's saving rule was now available to rebellious men and women, that they no longer had to live outside of it and experience all the fallout that we've experienced since Adam's rebellion.

He graciously invites us back home. He graciously invites us back under his rule through the Lord Jesus Christ.

[25 : 36] And here we have in verse 15, what we can consider a twin command. It's not really two separate commands. It is a twin command. If you want to think of it like this, it's like a Siamese twin.

Repent and believe is like a Siamese twin joined at the head, sharing one brain. You cut one off, both are going to die. Repentance has to do with turning away from sin.

It has to do with turning away from self and turning to God. Repentance is a word that captures both our heart and our heads.

It is a mental word. It means to think differently afterwards, but it means more than that. It means a deep rooted conviction. It is to consider a situation and to think about it differently, in a sense, to have regret about it.

And that's the idea here, that Jesus is inviting in his preaching fallen mankind to think about their rebellion and in light of thinking about it, turn away from it and turn to God and submit to his rule and to his lordship.

[26 : 52] But it only comes from conviction. It doesn't come from a mental awareness that things are wrong. And I think we know the difference. We can all say, well, yeah, that's wrong.

I know that's wrong. How many times have we said that? And we still do the wrong we know is wrong. We know it's wrong, but we do the wrong.

that's not repentance. Repentance is not just knowing it is wrong. Repentance is knowing that it is wrong and being convicted in the depth of our soul so much so that we turn away from it.

This preaching of the gospel, this call to repent was a call to turn from rebelling against God and living in God's world as if we were God.

And when you think about it, although it says repent and believe the gospel, it was enough just to say repent. Because again, you can't have one without the other. If you truly repent, you will believe the gospel.

[28 : 02] if you truly believe the gospel, you will repent. And so these are Siamese twins, as it were, in this message that Jesus brings.

He's saying the kingdom is available, the kingdom is at hand, this is the way you access the kingdom. John says it a little differently when he is speaking to Nicodemus and he says to Nicodemus, Nicodemus, unless the man is born again, he cannot see or enter the kingdom of God.

It's a different terminology for the same thing because the new birth includes repentance and believing the good news that God has made this offer to rebellious sinners and he says come home, come under my lordship, come under my rule, live my way, not your way, serve me in my

world.

And so we can't have one without the other. Now you may be wondering, well, really, how is it that commanding repentance demonstrates the authority of Jesus?

Other people say repent. John the Baptist called people to repent. Every preacher today who preaches calls people to repent. Why is it that you would say that Jesus was showing his divine authority by calling people to repentance?

[29 : 32] Here's why. When Jesus called people to repentance, it is different. See, when I call people to repentance, if I'm halfway sober, I'm aware of my own need to repent.

repentance, going to repent. Any preacher, any human being outside of the Lord Jesus Christ who calls men and women to repent, cannot do that absolutely without awareness of their own need for repentance, not just in coming to Christ, but in an ongoing way.

We need to repent. Repentance is not a past experience. Repentance is an ongoing experience.

But when the Lord Jesus Christ said repent and believe the gospel, he said it absolutely.

He had no sin to repent from. And when he was saying to repent, he was aware of what happened. He was aware of the issues in the garden. He was aware that he was speaking to a rebellious race of men, women, boys and girls, and he was calling them to repent and commanding that they should repent absolutely without any hint of sin in his own life.

and therefore his call to repent, the authority exhibited in his call to repent is light years beyond any other call for repentance.

[30 : 58] He commanded repentance. And no one could point the finger. You see, sometimes I may say, well, you need to repent. Are you aware of some sin I've committed?

Not so with the Lord Jesus Christ. repentance. He was without blame. He was without blemish. And he commanded repentance. And he had in view what the issues were.

The issue was we need to repent from living in God's world as God's creation as if it is our world and we are our own creation.

The repentance is not so much from the sins we commit. it is a fundamental issue. It is a fundamental issue that we are called to repent concerning.

We are called to repent concerning our relationship to God and our view of God. And Jesus commanded it. And he says if you're going to function and live in this kingdom, if you're going to be under the saving rule of God, you have to repent.

[32 : 05] and it must be fundamental and deep rooted to the issues that took place in the garden. You realize that the rebellion that Adam exhibited in the garden is in the DNA of every single human being.

It's not DNA. Adam in the garden essentially says, back aside God, I will be king. I will decide what is good, what is right, and I don't need your laws.

Brothers and sisters, that's in our DNA. And except for the mercy of God, that's the way we all go. We all go our own way. The Bible says it.

The Bible says all of us like sheep have gone astray. All of us have turned to our own way. And Jesus commanded repentance.

It was a flawless command and it had the authority of God because indeed he was God in the flesh.

[33 : 19] Jesus' authority is seen in commanding repentance and he doesn't just suggest it, he commands it. perhaps you hear this morning and for the first time you need to hear and heed this call to repent and believe the gospel.

And I urge you to, if you've not done that, if you've never done that, I urge you today, hear the words of the creator. Hear the words of the creator saying to you, you must not and you cannot live in my world as my creation, as if it is your world and you are your own creation.

Repent and believe the gospel and come under the saving rule of God. God. And for the rest of us who have repented and we know there's a point in time where we have trusted in Christ, I think we would all be honest this morning and say there have been times when we have even if temporarily put the crown on our head and lived as if we were God and we rebelled against God in different ways.

And so repentance must be not just something in our past, it must be something that we do in an ongoing way. It must be something that we do indeed on a daily basis.

Every single day you and I have need to repent and to turn back to God because we drift. We sing this song, prone to wander, Lord, I feel it.

[35 : 11] Prune to leave the God I love. Take my heart, take and seal it. seal it for your courts above. We need God to do that every day and every day we need to acknowledge that we turn away and we rebel.

One of the ways that we are reminded of I need to repent and we're reminded that some of the ways that we think are so contrary to God's ways is when we gather on mornings like this. We need sing. We need to repent and we're reminded how much we need to renew our repentance. I don't know if you've had the experience, but sometimes it is only in gatherings like this that some conviction that I need comes to me.

Where I can be holding on to particular sins and attitudes that are wrong is only as I come among the people of God, hearing the word of God, singing the songs of God, I'm reminded I need to repent.

I need to turn. And Jesus commands it. Well, not only does Jesus demonstrate his divine authority by commanding repentance, he also demonstrates divine authority by calling disciples.

[36 : 48] We see this in verses 16 through 20. What we see in verses 16 through 20 is nothing short of amazing. Nothing short of amazing.

It's the account of Jesus calling his first four disciples, Simon, Peter, his brother Andrew, and James and John, two brothers. they were fishermen. And from the description that we see in verse 20, James and John were part of a very sizable business.

Their father, Zebedee, the Bible says, he had hired servants. These were employees. They had a fishing business. The two of them were their father and they had at least two hired servants. but the wording would suggest that it was more than two. And Jesus calls them and Jesus says to them, come follow me.

And Mark says, immediately, immediately, they left and followed him. Simon and Andrew just left.

[38 : 01] They were casting a net. Jesus called them. They went and they followed him. James and John were with their father, Zebedee. And to understand the incredible implication of what happened in Jewish culture is very, very loyal.

It's a very loyal culture. And to walk away from a father, to walk away from the heritage of that family, took incredible resolve to do.

Because there were prices to pay for it. And Jesus comes in town and Jesus says to them, follow me and I will make you fishes of men. And they leave Jesus and they follow.

How do we explain that? How do we explain that? If you don't think that's a big deal, you go out there and try it. I don't think the prime minister could come right now and tell you, come, follow me and give you a job.

you'll say, huh? You could only offer me a job for five years? Because you may not have a job in five years.

[39 : 19] There's only one way to explain it. One way. Jesus possessed divine authority. God called God and his call to these men was more than just their call.

It was a summons. It was a divine summons. And they recognized the divine summons and they left everything and they followed him. No doubt they recognized Jesus was a rabbi, but here's what's interesting about what happened.

In that day, rabbis did not call disciples to themselves. it was actually considered to be less than fitting of them.

It was beyond their stature, or below their stature I should say, to go and call disciples. What happened in those days was prospective followers would look out and see which rabbi they want to follow and they would go to the rabbi and say, may I follow you?

May I become one of your disciples? And just knowing these guys, just imagine, do you think these four men had any interest in following any rabbi? Peter had a problem with cursing.

[40 : 34] James and John had an anger problem. There was one time in the ministry of Jesus, Jesus was going into a town, it seemed like the town was not going to receive him, they said call fire down on them.

I don't think they had any thoughts about following a rabbi. They were not the type. if Jesus was being advised in a general way, he would be told, go to Jerusalem, recruit some religious people. But he goes to Galilee and he recruits these fishermen. He looks at those that the religious leaders would never look at. And he calls them, he summons them, and they respond to the call.

So that's a remarkable thing. But what we see in it is a picture of God's call to those who come to follow him.

He takes the initiative. The same way Jesus took the initiative, and that was not normal to take the initiative, every single one of us who has ever come to Christ, every single one who will ever come to Christ, God takes the initiative.

[41 : 54] And in a sense, we're all just like Peter, James, and John, and Andrew, no interest in God or the things of God. God takes the initiative, and he calls us, and his call is a gracious and irresistible call to the undeserving.

But you consider who Jesus was. These four men were totally undeserving of him coming to them and summoning them to come and be his followers.

And what we see in the call to these first four disciples is the power and authority of God to transform lives and how we live and transform our priorities and what we live for.

people. And so we see these men, they answer the call of God to them and their lives are transformed.

And what Jesus essentially says to Peter and to Andrew is, I'm going to take the endeavor that you are involved in and I'm going to transform it into an endeavor for me.

[43 : 03] Now it should be clear to all of us that Jesus was calling these men to full-time ministry. He was calling them knowing that one day in a short three or so years, he was going to ascend back to heaven.

He was going to leave the mission to these men. He was calling them to follow him in a full-time way. And the truth is that God doesn't call all of us in that way. He doesn't call all of us to follow him in some full-time sense like serving in a church or serving on the mission field.

Some of us will but not most of us. But nonetheless, it is a true, the true call of God will result in a true transformation of our lives, how we live, and our priorities and what we live for.

it is a lasting change. So we don't have to quit our jobs as these disciples did.

We don't have to leave the thing that we do in our livelihood to have the transforming purpose of God in our lives.

[44 : 30] He will transform whatever we do. Whatever we are engaged in, it will be a reflection of the one who we follow. So if you're a teacher this morning, you're a teacher who teaches, well then, when Christ comes into your life, you begin to see yourself as a follower of Christ who is a teacher.

teacher. And you're called to see yourself as one who is engaged in Christ's mission as you teach and whatever else you do. And it doesn't mean that you go in the classroom, you teach Bible studies.

It doesn't mean that at all. It means that you teach us unto the Lord. You realize that God has taken this endeavor of mine and he's using it and he wants me to submit it all in my following of him.

If you're a student this morning, the same is true for you. You're to see yourself as a student, not just one who studies, but one who is a follower of Christ, who is a student and you are called to see yourself as engaged in Christ's mission as you study and indeed in whatever else you do.

And so whatever we do this morning, whatever our endeavor is, if we are truly following Jesus Christ, it is to have a transforming effect on our lives in its entirety.

[45 : 53] We have a different view. Our first and foremost call is to follow Christ. First and foremost, we are to identify as one who follows Jesus Christ.

Not as a husband, not as a wife, not as an employee or a business owner. We follow Christ and everything else comes under that umbrella of following Christ.

We seek to serve him, living for him in his world. We do it with our whole lives, living for his glory, living for his pleasure, because we know that all that we are, and all that we have, we owe it to him.

The next scene that Mark presents is Jesus in the synagogue. He's in the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and here in the synagogue, Mark highlights the unique and divine authority of Jesus in two ways.

first, which is the third view of the authority of Jesus. The first is in teaching God's word. Mark tells us in verse 22, that those in the temple were astonished at the teaching of Jesus.

[47 : 22] I mean, and they would have heard any number of people teach in the synagogue. But Mark tells us what the difference was. Mark says, he spoke as one who had authority, not like the scribes.

They knew the difference. They knew the difference. And the reason that Jesus spoke as one who had authority is he spoke as God himself.

Mark says, people saw that Jesus was different because he had an authority that the scribes did not have. Jesus was the ultimate scribe.

He was the word made flesh. He was the one through whom God says, in the last days I've spoken through my son.

The writer to the Hebrews tells us as he opens the letter. And he spoke the word of God with the authority of God.

[48 : 31] God says, God is a wonderful thing that we are memorizing God's word together as we did this morning as we will continue to do as we gather on Sunday mornings.

But let us remember this morning brothers and sisters, we're not just memorizing their words. It's not just a competition to see how much we could put into our brains and recall.

all. We are to remember that what we are memorizing is the authoritative word of God. And we need to ask the Lord to help us to see that this is authoritative word.

And if we see it as God's authoritative word, there's only one logical response. response. There's only one logical response that we recognize God's word that we are memorizing as truly the word of God.

And that is it is to be heeded and it is to be obeyed. We have to submit our lives to it. We're to live by it. And fourth and finally in the synagogue, Jesus demonstrates divine authority by casting out demons.

[49 : 47] We see this in verses 23 through 26. A man in the synagogue was possessed by a demon whom Mark refers to as an unclean spirit in verse 23.

The unclean spirit speaks through the man in verse 24 and says, what have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God. The unclean spirit makes it clear that Satan and his demons are fully aware of God's redemptive plan as it has been revealed. But Jesus doesn't entertain this demon.

Jesus simply commands him with the word, come out of the man. And he does so without hesitation. The man convulses and the spirit cries out in a loud voice and he leaves.

Now you may be thinking, well, other people cast out demons as well. How does this show the authority of Jesus? It's not just in the casting out of demons, it's how we cast them out.

[51 : 06] There's no struggle. this is not an exorcism that goes on for hours. And that many times are really deceptive.

Sometimes these exorcisms are going on and the demon says, okay, okay, we're all gone. Yeah, that's the way. Demons, you can't believe them, you can't trust them.

Wasn't that? This was no show. No. I grew up in a Pentecostal church, so I, I mean, Fay was there. I mean, an off Sunday was when a demon didn't, or when somebody didn't act up. And after a while, you didn't know where truth from fiction was. This wasn't a show.

This wasn't a spectacle. This was one who had authority over demons. He said, come out. And the demon did.

[52 : 10] They were not amazed that a demon came out in the synagogue. They were amazed at his authority. Read the text. There's no hint that they were captivated by a demon being cast out.

And evidently, I mean, we read about the sons of Sceva in the book of Acts. And they went around and they were trying to cast the demons in the name of the Jesus who Paul preached.

And so they would have seen demons cast out before. They would have seen exorcisms before. But the spectacle was not that.

It was the authority that Jesus exhibited. They recognized his authority in casting out demons.

And why were they amazed? They were amazed because Jesus was exercising and demonstrating God's authority. And it was evident to them.

[53 : 09] They'd never seen it like that. Why does John do this? Why does John highlight the authority of Jesus in these ways that he has?

I think Mark intends for his readers to ask and answer this question. If Jesus is exercising God's authority by commanding repentance, by calling disciples, by teaching God's word, and by casting out demons, who is he?

Who is he? Mark is presenting the evidence to cause us to ask the question, who is this man? Who is he? Who is he? he? The bottom line and very sad point is that while many in Jesus' day

recognize his authority, they didn't respond to that authority.

Notice in verse 28, it says, at once his fame spread everywhere throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee. Many came to see Jesus.

But here's the verdict. On the day of Pentecost, only 120 could be found waiting in the upper room.

[54 : 36] The countless thousands who had come to be healed and to be fed and to watch healing and to watch demons being cast out and to listen to teaching and to even remark as these remarked that he has great authority, they didn't submit to that authority.

120 left after that massive showing of following is pitiful. And brothers and sisters, may we not be like those who were exposed to the authority of Jesus and then just turn their backs and went their own way and live their own way.

may we recognize that Jesus exercised God's authority and therefore Jesus was indeed who he said he was, who the scriptures say he was, he was indeed God in the flesh, he was the divine son of God.

And if we truly believe that, there's only one logical response, submit to him, serve him, and live for him. The people in Jesus' day saw his divine authority, but most of them did not submit to it.

And the question this morning is, what about you? What about you? Let's pray. God bless