

To Blaze Abroad the Matter

Mark 1:16 – 45



~ Our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God passes through a section of Scripture today that many people bi-pass and, of those who read it, most misapply it completely, generally speaking. Mark covers a great deal of territory in this first chapter, but we're not moving so fast through it. Mark is brief and to the point; but we're going to dissect a lot of what he says, just to make sure we end up with the same sum total in the final analysis. Interestingly, irrespective of how thoroughly we consider Mark, when we are finished examining this Gospel, we'll still feel like we rushed it. There is literally enough spiritual edification contained in this Gospel that we could examine it for the remainder of our natural lives and still come up short.

In our first two reports from this Gospel account, we saw John the Baptist introduce Jesus to the nation Israel. Then, God the Father identified and confirmed Who Jesus was – His Son! God also confirmed that we can trust Christ because God Himself is well-pleased with Jesus. That came after the temptation in the wilderness, which Jesus handled quite capably. Now, the Lord is being illustrated by His words and His works as our account picks back up and runs through the remainder of this chapter.

Mark didn't begin with a genealogy; he began with the credentials of Christ. The Romans were men of action, and they ruled the world at the time in which we are studying - and they were less than concerned with Jesus background. This Gospel is addressed to the Roman man of power, as we have seen. Matthew was written to the religious man; Mark is written to the strong man and Luke is written to the thinking man. John is altogether different; as we shall see; and is darkly addressed to the wretched man that so desperately needs salvation!

We're following the Lord in this section of Scripture; and He has begun His ministry in Galilee as we find Him walking along the beach. The account we

have here in Mark is not the first time Jesus met with Peter and Andrew, either. John gives a casual account where Jesus previously spoke with them but didn't ask them to follow Him. Now, however, as Jesus begins His earthly ministry, we find they are fishing in Galilee. Today, however, Jesus calls them, very definitely, to discipleship; that is, to be fishers of men! In Luke chapter five, we'll find they return to fishing for fish again, though.

Anyways, the final call to apostleship will happen in this Gospel and is also recounted in Matthew chapter ten and Luke chapter six. We mentioned in Matthew that there were three callings; and each time they went back to fishing. Simon Peter said, "... depart from me, Lord; I am a sinful man." Simon Peter really meant: go get someone else! Peter just wanted to be left alone because he had failed so miserably. The Lord Jesus didn't give up on that sinful man who had no faith; and thank God for that! Well, this is the second call, and they leave their nets and follow Him now....

16 Now as he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

17 And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

18 And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.

19 And when he had gone a little further thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets.

20 And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.

21 And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the Sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught.

~ Mark drops us in on a typical day in the life of Jesus and the apostles. They are very busy all day long and always moving; and this just happens to be the Sabbath day, too. Well, they're about the Fathers business, as Jesus

would say. The Father worketh hitherto on the Sabbath, so Jesus also worked. Jesus and the apostles didn't keep an eight-hour day, either; He that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps. So, we traveled all the way from Galilee to Capernaum in just one verse - and that was the morning. They moved into a center that was not really vital to religion. The best we can tell, when Jesus left Nazareth - when His own people would not receive Him - He went down to Capernaum and made that His headquarters and never left there.

Well, Jesus gives us the potency of truth and the manner of a man. My biggest criticism of any preacher is that the Word of God is not spoken with authority anymore. A ministry that does not speak with sound Biblical authority will certainly fail. A ministry that does not teach with authority has no faith! The Word of God is simply not being preached or taught today in an educated manner – it just isn't happening except in very, very small segments of society. We have a radical departure between the pulpit and the truth of the Word of God; a tremendous neglect and a humongous bifurcation has occurred. The extent of Biblical illiteracy amongst self-professing believers is astounding. We have already said the synagogue taught nothing vital in that day. As a result, when Christ came to the earth, there was a huge variance in the messages....

22 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

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

24 Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.

25 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.

26 And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him.

~ Only God is in control in the spiritual realm, friends. This is the manifestation of demonism. It was prevalent in the Roman Empire; and there is evidence that Satan worship and the manifestation of demonism were, in fact, rampant in Rome at this particular time. The only way this culmination of a sick society's needs could ever be met is by the Lord Jesus. He alone can move and operate in this realm. I'm sure that's why Mark recorded this as the first miracle. Two things are implied by this and the manner in which it is presented. First, Christ has absolute power over all other spiritual dominions. Second, only God could perform this miracle! This all spoke of His credentials of authority and power as God; He taught as One that has authority and He demonstrated His power regularly. This is a tremendous area of the Bible we are in.

One cannot reasonably explain why a young person leaves a home with a loving Christian mother and father and joins a group of friends that live in a state of self-pity. They become totally engrossed with melancholy because they are demon-possessed. If you listen closely they'll all tell you they're unhappy; that they have no freedoms and they're sad that the country is corrupt and so much nonsensical stuff like that; but never has a generation really had what this generation does! See, the problem is that they have tried everything, and they know nothing works. They despise God, so Satanism becomes prominent; even amongst some groups that worship the devil but have no idea they are already Satanists. The activity in the occult is unbelievable and out of control. There were three prevalent Biblical periods of demonism: in the time of Moses; in the time of Elijah and here when the Lord Jesus was on earth! Well, there's only One way to deal with it and that's in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ; God alone can control this. All of that is wrapped up in the first miracle in Mark! Jesus spoke in the realm of authority. Jesus spoke with power every time He did speak! Here, within the realm of miracles, they could not understand His authority at all....

27 And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.

28 And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout the entire region round about Galilee.

~ Well, that was a typical day with Jesus and now we are, evidently, all of the sudden, at a point in time in that same afternoon getting towards sunset! The second miracle took place the same day. As in Matthew, we will have very few recorded incidents of Jesus healing in this Gospel. There were thousands of miracles, but we have only a handful given on record - and the emphasis just doesn't happen to be on healing, friends. The demon world recognizes the Lord Jesus Christ; we're told the demons believe and yet they are not saved! Let's be super careful with our confession....

29 And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

30 But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell him of her.

31 And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.

32 And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils.

33 And all the city was gathered together at the door.

34 And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him.

35 And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.

36 And Simon and they that were with him followed after him.

37 And when they had found him, they said unto him, All men seek for thee.

38 And he said unto them; Let us go into the next towns that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth.

39 And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out demons.

40 And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

41 And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean.

42 And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.

43 And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away;

44 And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

45 But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter.

~ The last miracle was a hard case of leprosy. Leprosy was, actually, not incurable in that day as we'll see in Leviticus. It was a horrible disease, but it didn't have to be a killer. We looked at the psychological side of this miracle in Matthew when the Lord touched Him! In Israel, in that day, you just didn't touch a leper - and this man hadn't had the warmth and compassion of a human touch in many years. This man would have lived in total seclusion. He saw other people, but he could never interact with family or in society in that condition. That's the point where the Lord touches him and cleanses him. Jesus said, "I will."

We need to be praying that the will of the Father be done today. When we discover His will, then we need to publish it. Our Spiritual Safari is all about

publishing the Word of God – making it known to the world. I hope these reports set something on fire and I hope that something is your heart. The Lord told them to tell nobody, but they told everybody; the Lord tells us today to tell everybody - and we tell nobody! How backwards we really are. That's tantamount to willful disobedience to most of you readers, by the way. Make a note. Let's blaze the matter abroad, shall we? Have you told someone about Jesus today – this week – this year? Ever? ~

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