

# Home Study

## Mark's Epiphany



MONDAY, JANUARY 11, 2021

### INTRODUCTION

If you wanted to introduce Jesus Christ to someone who knows nothing about him, what might you say? How would you describe Jesus? What parts of Jesus' teachings, or stories from his life, would be most important to share?

Centuries ago, a man named Mark wrote his Gospel to help non-Jewish readers come to know Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God. His fast-paced account of Christ's life skips over the birth and childhood years. Mark begins with the story of the Lord's baptism as an adult. He then packages three full years of ministry into the first ten chapters of his Gospel, while the final six chapters tell of Jesus' final week.

Today Mark shares with us the first of many healing miracle stories. While another Gospel writer, John, tells us that Christ's very first public miracle was turning water into wine (see John 2), Mark chooses the following event to begin describing how Jesus used his divine power to bring healing and wholeness to broken people.

### TODAY'S READING

In your Bible, read Mark 1:21-28. As you read, make note of what catches your attention, or surprises you.

Thinking about the whole story you just read, what words would you use to describe the overall reaction of the people to this miraculous event?

Be sure to note that Jesus began his public ministry in a synagogue (verse 21). His aim was not to start a revolution, or to reject everything about the religion of the Jews. The way Jesus taught from the Old Testament Scriptures, however, sounded different somehow to the people who listened to him.

Mark tells us Jesus taught with "authority" (verse 22). What do you think that meant, specifically, for those present in the synagogue that day?

From where did this authority of Jesus come?

What level of authority does Jesus really have, when it comes to your day-to-day decisions and choices?

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In the first healing miracle that Mark shares, Jesus casts out an evil spirit. This event shows us clearly that Christ's authority is not primarily on a human, physical level (although many of his healing miracles exhibited exactly such authority), but on the spiritual plane.

The Bible teaches us that our daily struggles are not only on the human, physical plane. We, too, are caught up in a spiritual warfare – a battle, if you will, for our very souls. See also Ephesians 6:10-13, and 1 Peter 5:8-9.

How can the authority of Jesus Christ, as Mark describes it in today's story, help us in our daily battles against sin and evil?

### **PRAYER**

Lord Jesus Christ, you came to teach, to heal, and to do battle against the forces of spiritual darkness. As I/we read the Gospel of Mark, make yourself known to me/us more and more. Teach me/us to trust you, and rely on you, in all things. Help me/us to acknowledge your authority to walk in your footsteps this day, and. Amen.