

• *A typical day*

Mark now presents a description of a typical day in the ministry of Jesus^{□1} and a story which explains the next phase of what happened in His work^{□2}. We begin by looking at a typical day.

□1 1:21–39
□2 1:40–45

Jesus' – a person of great authority

• *Simply 'Jesus'*

1. **Jesus was a person of great authority.** He was humble and made no ostentatious claims for Himself. He clearly was not a person who had any special standing in the eyes of the world. So far He has been described simply as 'Jesus'. He is known by nothing other than an ordinary Jewish name. Jesus does not take to Himself any ambitious title. He wants people to see who He is by spiritual discernment, not by His making the kind of claims that all sorts of cranks make. So He does not speak of Himself as 'Jesus the rabbi'. He has no political power; He is not 'Jesus the governor'. He is simply 'Jesus'.

• *Authority over evil spirits*

And yet He has great authority. People marvel at the authority of His **teaching**^{□1}. Then they marvel at the authority He has over the **realm of evil spirits**^{□2}. Without any attempts on His side to become famous, He becomes well known. He was not pushing for fame, but He got it without trying. The news spread around about Him^{□3}. When a man or woman has spiritual power the news gets out! No special advertising is needed. It happened to Jesus; it will happen to us.

□1 1:21–22
□2 1:23–27
□3 1:28

• *Authority over sickness*

Jesus comes into Simon Peter's house^{□1}. He has **authority over sickness** and so is told about Peter's mother-in-law. He heals her^{□2}. All over the world people are extremely concerned about sickness. People often want Jesus as a healer far more than they want Him as a Saviour from sin.

□1 1:29
□2 1:30–31

Jesus demonstrated His faith by His healings. There was no manipulation, no deceit, no over-claiming. It is obvious that when Jesus prayed for the sick, **things happened!** In Mark 1:32–34 we see the greatness of His authority. Dozens of people want to see Him. And Mark 1:21–39 records the events of just twenty-four hours!

2. Drawing on the source of great authority

• *Prayer*

2. **Jesus was a person who drew constantly on the source of great authority.** Where did Jesus get His authority from? One might think He had authority because He was the Son of God. That is true, but there was more to it than that. The man Jesus had received the baptism with the Spirit. Then one might think that the Son of God baptized with the Holy Spirit might have all the authority He needed, but having received the Spirit did He need something else? Yes, He needed to pray! And so in the midst of an extremely busy time, He deliberately absented Himself and prayed^{□1}.

□1 1:35

3. Preparation for ministry full of wisdom

• *Compassion*

3. **Jesus was a person whose preparation for ministry was full of wisdom.** An extra story is inserted between the one day's activity of Mark 1:21–39 and the account of rising hostility in 2:1–3:6. The point is that it was this event that caused Jesus to become famous at this stage of His ministry. A leper came to Him asking for cleansing^{□1}. Moved with compassion Jesus healed him^{□2}.

□1 1:40
□2 1:41–42

• *Stern warning*

Jesus' compassion balances His authority. People of authority do not usually have much compassion. People of compassion do not normally have much authority. Jesus has both.

Jesus sternly warns the man not to tell anyone what has happened to him. At this time Jesus just wants to get on with His work of preaching. He is not in a hurry to become famous! **If He becomes well-known it will only hinder His work** because, as Jesus knows,

the Jewish authorities will be angry about His activities. Jesus has come to Galilee to get away from Jerusalem. He has a lot to do and does not want to be hindered by the Jewish authorities any more than necessary. So this healed leper is told to **keep quiet!**

• **News spreads**

But despite the great mercy the leper has received from Jesus, he does not have the gratitude to do as Jesus tells him. He **spreads** the news everywhere and soon, for a while, Jesus is not able to go into the towns of Galilee.

• **Opposition grows through leper's disobedience**

The little story illustrates how Jesus wants our gratitude but does not always get it. Jesus knew what He was doing when He told the man to keep quiet. The disobedience of the healed leper actually did Jesus damage and made Him face **opposition** from the authorities sooner than He needed to.

• **Miracles illustrate Jesus' complete authority**



Jesus has **supreme authority**. His miracles are proofs of His faith, and proofs of His power to do anything. They cannot be 'switched on' by the power of any man or woman. The leper was not 'taking by faith' a miracle, he was casting himself on Jesus' mercy. The miracle illustrates what Jesus is able to do, and His authority over every aspect of life. It is a foretaste of the new heavens and new earth in which every disease will be totally healed, never to return again.

• **Cleansing from every sort of defilement**

Meanwhile Mark's Gospel invites us to see Jesus as a person who combines authority and compassion. We are invited to come to Him to be **cleansed of every sort of defilement**, whether by natural means or by the sheer power of His word. Everything which resembles the 'leprosy' of New Testament times – it was not only modern leprosy but included a collection of infectious skin diseases – is within His power to heal. 'Leprosy' brought suffering, isolation and criticism, and was considered a sign of the judgement of God. Nations which obeyed God were promised freedom from such pestilences, but Israel was apparently full of sickness and disease in the days of Jesus.

• **The Son of God brings forgiveness, cleansing and deliverance**

Authoritative teaching, authority over demons, the ability by His faith to banish disease – they were all signs that this humble person was in fact the Son of God come to bring forgiveness, cleansing and deliverance of every kind.

 <p>slices.org.uk</p>	<p>Dr Michael Eaton is highly respected internationally as a theologian, author, preacher and teacher. He lives in Kenya where he is one of the leaders of the Chrisco Fellowship. His <i>Preaching Through The Bible</i> (PTTB) books are highly popular worldwide. Michael Eaton puts the theological and practical meaning of the Bible in a clear and down-to-earth way so that what is written can be easily understood by the reader.</p>	
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