

## **Kingdom Power**

Scripture: Mark 1:29–39

Code: 41-6

This morning I want to invite you to turn back to the first chapter of the Gospel of Mark. As you remember, Mark opens his history of the life and ministry of Jesus in verse 1 with a declaration of truth; that is, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. That is the affirmation that Mark will prove. He says it at the beginning, he is going to write a history, at least the beginning of the history of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

To say that any man is the Son of God is a grandiose statement, must be supported, and so Mark begins immediately to give unmistakable testimony to the fact that his identification of Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God, is supportable.

The Old Testament promised a forerunner would come who would announce the arrival of the Messiah. Mark introduces us to that forerunner, John the Baptist, and quotes John the Baptist in verse 7, who said, “After me, One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to stoop down and untie the thong of His sandals. I baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.” And so Mark first gives us affirming testimony to the deity and Messiahship of Jesus Christ from the forerunner, John the Baptist.

And then, in verses 10 and 11, Mark takes us immediately to the baptism of Jesus. He was baptized by John in the Jordan in verse 9. Immediately coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opening and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him and a voice came out of the heavens. It is the voice of God the Father, “You are my beloved Son, in you I am well pleased.”

The forerunner, the last Old Testament prophet and the greatest prophet who had ever lived up to his time, identified Jesus as the Messiah, the Savior, the Son of God. The Holy Spirit identifies Him as the Son of God by settling upon Him to empower Him. The Father identifies, affirms Him as His beloved Son by speaking out of heaven.

Jesus then gives testimony to His own authority in chapter 1 and verse 17 when He says to some fishermen, “Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men.” A demon gives testimony to His identity in verse 24. When Jesus goes into a synagogue at Capernaum, the demon seeing Jesus there is terrified and panics and screams out in verse 24, “What business do we have with each other, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.”

Testimony from the prophet, John the Baptist, testimony from the Holy Spirit, testimony from the Father, testimony from Christ Himself about His power to rescue men, and testimony from a demon as to the identity of Jesus Christ sums up the immediate evidences and testimonies to the claim of Mark that this One known as Jesus is indeed the Messiah and the Son of God.

It's fine to make those claims, but can Jesus sustain them? Can He demonstrate them? Can they be proven? Are there evidences for them? Well, we saw - didn't we? - in the last study, verses 21 to 28,

that Jesus gives clear evidence of who He is in the synagogue by casting out that very demon who identified Him. Verse 25, "Jesus rebuked him, saying, 'Be quiet and come out of him.'" Verse 26 says, "He threw the man into a convulsion and then the unclean spirit screamed with a loud voice and came out of him." People were amazed. They said, "What is this? A new teaching with authority, He commands even the unclean spirits and they obey Him."

Our Lord demonstrates His authority over the souls of men by saying, "I will make you fishers of men. I will lead you to rescuing the souls of men." The Lord demonstrates His power over the spiritual realm of demons by commanding a demon who instantly obeys against his own will. By the time you get to verse 28, you have amassed a great amount of evidence from all different testimonies to the deity and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ.

That brings us to verse 29, and starting in verse 29, Mark gives us one day in the life of the Lord, in fact, one part of a day, just what's left of the day. You remember verse 21 said they went into Capernaum and went into the synagogue because it was the Sabbath, and Jesus was teaching, and that's where He cast the demon out. It's the same day. That would have occurred in the morning. And the services in a Sabbath synagogue would end at noon, and so we pick the story up at verse 29.

"Immediately after they came out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew with James and John. Now, Simon's mother-in-law was lying sick with a fever and immediately they spoke to Jesus about her. And He came to her and raised her up, taking her by the hand, and the fever left her and she waited on them. When evening came" - same day - "after the sun had set, they began bringing to Him all who were ill and those who were demon-possessed, and the whole city had gathered at the door. 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.

"In the early morning" - this is the next day - "while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, went away to a secluded place and was praying there. Simon and his companions searched for Him and they found Him and said to Him, 'Everyone is looking for you.' He said to them, 'Let us go somewhere else to the towns nearby so that I may preach there also, for that is what I came for.' And He went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out demons."

The supernatural power, cosmic authority of Jesus is displayed as proof of His deity. It's unmistakable. If He is to be the Savior of the world, He has to be able to rescue souls from Satan, He has to be able to rescue souls from sin. If He is going to raise men and women in resurrection form into the glories of heaven, He must have power over the effects of the curse on the body. That is to say, He must have power over the physical and spiritual effects of the curse. We all understand that when Adam sinned, the whole human race fell. We were all cursed, we all bear the marks of that curse, both spiritually and physically.

The Savior of the world has to rescue us from the effects of the curse in the spiritual realm, as well as in the physical realm. And that is why when Jesus came, He showed His power over the spiritual realm by casting out demons who are spirit beings so that it would be clear that He had control over spirit beings, and that would obviously include the spirits of men who could be by His power rescued from sin and condemnation. And He healed diseases day after day after day to show that He had power over the physical effects of the curse and could create a body fit for a resurrected glory in heaven. This is powerful evidence.

So we go through the ministry of Jesus and His life, we constantly see Him healing diseases and casting out demons to demonstrate His power over both the physical and spiritual realms, which had both been devastated by the fall and by sin. And so in a very brief summary of just a day, there are countless healings and deliverances that occurred in that one day, literally a day, a part of a day from after noon to sundown.

Now, as we look at this text that I read to you, I want to show you three things that are here. We'll call one proof, one power, and one priority. Proof, power, and priority. It is clear that He is declaring Himself to be the Messiah, the Savior of the world, the Lamb of God, the Son of God, can He prove it? Does He have power that belongs only to God?

Well, He does and He demonstrates that power over the spiritual realm, demons, and over the physical realm, disease and even death. It is still the Sabbath. The healing has - I should say the deliverance has just occurred in the Sabbath as recorded in verses 21 to 28. Sabbath service has ended and we come to the proof of His person - the proof of His person. Is He who He claims to be? Verse 29. "Immediately they came out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew with James and John."

Capernaum is the city, the largest city on the Lake of Galilee, the center of the fishing industry there and the center of the trade routes east and west and even north and south. Service would end about noon on the Saturday. They came out, meaning Jesus and His followers, who would be Simon and Andrew his brother, and James and John, who were also brothers.

They're all fishermen. They're all associated in the fishing business, which was a huge business, not an unsophisticated one at all, but rather the fishing business on the Lake of Galilee produced enough fish to be literally transported, exported to the Mediterranean world, fish being the staple meat in the ancient world.

So they're businessmen. They know each other well. Two sets of brothers. They had been at the synagogue. They had been following Jesus since He called them. And we read about that in verses 16 and following. They had left their nets and they had left their business to now become full-time followers of Jesus. And they had been there in the synagogue.

This isn't the first time they'd seen Him do a miracle. According to Luke chapter 4, He had done many mighty works in Capernaum already. He had done many mighty works in the year before in Judea in the south. They knew His power. And it's because they knew His power that they invite Him home for lunch.

By the way, they were originally Simon and Andrew - Simon, who later became known as Peter - they were originally from Bethsaida. Bethsaida is a town on the north shore of the Lake of Galilee, a little bit to the east, easy walking distance. They had relocated. John 1:44 says they were from Bethsaida, they had relocated to Capernaum, no doubt for the sake of business. And so they invited Jesus to come home. They would be regular synagogue attenders anywhere that they went, but certainly here in their hometown synagogue, they were there when Jesus spoke.

Now, Simon Peter was married. We know that from 1 Corinthians 9, verse 5, where it is said that

Simon Peter has a wife who literally goes with him on missionary trips. And the implication is that the church supported that, that he took his wife along on mission trips, which would indicate by the time he's into his full-blown ministry in the book of Acts, his children, if he had some, and tradition says they had children - the Bible doesn't say anything about it - but if they did have children, they would be old enough to be able to care for themselves and Peter could take his wife along with him on mission trips. That's the statement of 1 Corinthians chapter 9 in verse 5.

But at this particular point early in the ministry of Jesus, Peter still lives in Capernaum, and he has quite a house there. You say, "How do you know what kind of house he had there?" Because I've been there, I've been to Peter's house, and any of you who have been to Israel have been to Peter's house and you say, like so many people say, "Is that really Peter's house? Or is that just some late decision by some board of tourism creating a thing and calling it Peter's house so they could make money?"

Look, it's every likelihood that that is in fact the location of Peter's house. Excavations have been done in that area that have unearthed the synagogue. And if you go to Capernaum today, about all there is in Capernaum, there's one little tiny building that is a kind of a monastery, that's the only occupied building in Capernaum area, the rest is ruins and the dominant ruins are the ruins of the synagogue.

The synagogue, some of the ruins would be later synagogues built on top of earlier synagogues, but they would put a synagogue on a synagogue on a synagogue on a synagogue, like when you go to Geneva, Switzerland, you visit the church where John Calvin preached, if you go down in the basement deep enough, you come to a church from the first century because they built churches on churches on churches through history. So there's every reason to think that the synagogue is the place where the synagogue was.

A one-minute walk from the slope where the synagogue is toward the water, and you come to Peter's house, what is traditionally known as Peter's house. One writer describes it as a house that's part of a large insula complex. In an insula complex, you have all the windows and doors on the inside, surrounding a courtyard, and the walls are not windowed on the street side. You go into an entrance door and you have a large plaza courtyard and apartments all surrounding it that were shared by all the members of the extended family. That's why Peter could live there and his wife would live there and his mother-in-law would live there and Andrew would live there and the children would live there.

It tells us a little bit about the fact that Peter was not just a guy with a hook and a fishing rod, he was a little more up the food chain than that. This house, the excavations of this house, they have found hearths, several of them, meaning there were a number of kitchens there. They have found millstones for grain. They have found stairways to the roofs of the dwellings. The building itself originally was built out of black base salt stone over which a flat roof of wood and thatch was placed.

What is really interesting about it is that archeological investigations have discovered sacred devotional graffiti written on the stone in Greek and Latin and Syriac and Aramaic scratched also in plaster, indicating that it was a gathering place for Christians and most likely a church, get this, going back to the end of the first century or the beginning of the second century. So they were close enough that they knew people who knew Peter, who knew where Peter lived. When you have a tradition that is that old, one writer says, this is a strong possibility that the site indeed preserves Peter's house.

Well, the synagogue, a one-minute walk to Peter's house, and that's what Jesus was invited to do. They see Jesus being in Capernaum in this occasion as an opportunity for Him to display His power in behalf of a family member. Verse 30, Now, Simon's mother-in-law was lying sick with a fever. Luke, the physician, adds, "megas fever," high fever. She had some kind of a severe infection, that's what produces a fever, right? The body working really hard to fight the infection.

Understand, as I told you a few months ago, that no one was really cured of a disease until 1885. In the ancient world, they didn't know what we know in modern medicine. They didn't know about viruses and bacteria. People just languished. She had a severe infection, producing a high fever, which was of grave concern to her daughter and her son-in-law, Peter. So it's a family crisis. And it's clearly the reason they invited Jesus to lunch. And it says in verse 30, "Immediately they spoke to Jesus about her."

There's that "immediately" again, everything with Mark is immediately. No sooner had He come to the house than they made request of Him, in Luke's account. Luke 4 has an account of this. Matthew 8 has an account of this. Luke says they made request of Him. The request was, "Can you heal our mother-in-law?" As I said, they had already seen evidences of healings. Look at Luke 4, I think it's verse 43, where it talks about many, many wonderful works that He had done already. Verse 23, Luke 4:23, "Many wonderful works that He had done in Capernaum."

Well, Jesus responded. Verse 31, "He came to her and raised her up." Luke adds, "She was lying down and He was standing over her." So she was so fevered that she was lying flat. He was standing over her. And it simply says, "He raised her up." How did He do it? By taking her by the hand. He just pulled her up. And Luke adds, "He rebuked the fever. 'Go away, fever.'" That's some kind of power when even a fever obeys, when all of the causes of the fever disappear.

You remember back in verse 25 he said - Mark said that Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, rebuked the demon. Here He's rebuking fever. He has total sovereign control over the spiritual world and total sovereign control over the physical world. He commands and there is instant compliance. Luke says she immediately arose.

Mark's account, "Taking her by the hand, raised her up and the fever left her." I don't know how long she had been ill, but she had been ill long enough to be prone, flat, and they were fearful. But at that very moment, the fever left her. And it says, end of verse 31, "She waited on them," diakoneō, she served them. She got up and made lunch. That's maybe the most important comment. The infection was gone. The fever was gone. The symptoms were gone.

Now, you know if you've had any kind of a fever for any length of time that even when your temperature starts to come down, you feel - what? - weak and that's when you don't want to do nothing but have somebody bring you chicken soup or something. She had no weakness, no dizziness, no sweating, no struggling. All symptoms were gone. She was as if she had never been ill. So well, she served Sabbath dinner. And she didn't have a microwave and she didn't have an oven and there wasn't a store nearby and she didn't have a freezer. She did everything you had to do to feed four big fishermen and Jesus and the rest of the family, who would have all been there.

Now listen, folks, this is an important place for me to say some things I want to say about healing. So

hold onto your seatbelt and just listen, okay? I'm saying this because I care and because it's true and it's necessary. There have always been false healers who claimed to be able to heal, who prey on people's sicknesses, who prey on people who are suffering, who prey on people who have disabilities - for money - for money. They are, I think, the lowest of the low, the basest of the base. You don't get any lower than to get rich by promising a healing to suffering people, a healing you cannot deliver, and a healing God does not promise.

Every time I hear Benny Hinn and his ilk say, "If you send me your seed faith, you send me your money, I'll pray over your letter and God will send you a healing," I grieve in my heart. Those false promises prey on desperate people and the world is full of them. It is, to me, the most heinous possible misrepresentation of God and Christ. To me, it is a kind of blasphemy because the net effect is you got all my money, I'm still sick, I reject your God. It's horrendous.

Look, since the fall of man in the Garden of Eden, disease has been a terrible reality, has it not? We live in a very, very different world than some other people on our planet, places like India and Bangladesh and Africa. But in ancient times, everybody lived like that. Everybody lived like a third-world country. There was no cures. There was no ability to diagnose or deal with disease at its root level.

So for millennia, the search for cures to alleviate illness and suffering has consumed mankind and created ground for false healers. People used to travel around America in covered wagons selling snake oil, right? Taking advantage of sick people. Cults promised healing because people are desperate, totally desperate.

Can I tell you something? If there was such a thing as a gift of healing, I'd ask God for it. I went to the hospital the other night, a man I've known for 60 years, critical care, tubes going in everywhere. I walked through that hospital, I saw little children who were seriously ill. I saw all kinds of people who were suffering. I went in and stood by the bed of my friend and talked with him and to pray with him. I would have given anything for the gift of healing.

I would love to be able to do what Jesus did. I'd love to just go up and down the halls, go in the room, out of the room, in the room, out of the room, in the room, have everybody get out of bed and walk out. By the way, I didn't run into any healers there. Benny Hinn was not there.

I've stood by the parents of a young person fighting for life in an intensive care ward because he had a motorcycle accident. I was powerless to do anything. I've seen parents weeping in a hospital room because their little child is dying of leukemia. I've been with those people who are watching their spouse die of cancer. I've been in those places where the people are comatose and the family is weeping. I was with a friend in Houston having a heart transplant. He never survived. I was there to sort of catch the brokenhearted people.

I've been there with the disabled people. I know a lot of them right here in our own church who come in here in a wheelchair, who have a hard time talking, can't walk, have to be cared for.

I wish I had that power. I don't have that power and no one does. Think of how thrilling it would be if I had that power or if somebody had that power. If you could just go through the cancer ward and heal everybody, go through the AIDS clinic and heal everybody. Go where they have tuberculosis and

whatever other diseases, tumors, just heal everybody.

Why don't the healers do that? Where were they? Well, maybe if they all got together and they just - like twenty of them went through a hospital, maybe they could do it collectively. You're never going to see one of them in a hospital unless he's visiting his sick friends or sick himself. They have to stay in their tent or their building or their TV studio to pull off their deception.

They aren't going to go to Africa and heal people. They aren't going to go to India and Bangladesh. Why? Because they can't heal, no one can heal. And listen to this: Even God doesn't promise you healing. What He does promise you is death. It's appointed unto men once to die. You have that promise from God. You will die. You have no promise that you will be healed. Your faith has nothing to do with whether you're healed or not healed. You can't activate some kind of healing by just believing. That kind of positive thinking is useless and pointless, and people are becoming filthy rich by selling that deceptive lie.

I watched one the other night that said, "Send me a thousand dollars. Send me a thousand dollars and I will talk to God and your healing will come." The gift of healing has been claimed by Roman Catholicism through the years. They say they have John the Baptist's bones, Peter's bones, pieces of the cross of Christ and some of Mary's breast milk in a vial. And if you come in contact with that, you can be healed. If you go to Lourdes - what, twenty million people? I think it's like twenty million people have gone to Medjugorje in Yugoslavia because supposedly the virgin showed up there and talked to six kids in 1981.

Look, people are desperate for healing. And if you offer it, they'll unload their money, if you're clever enough to deceive them. They even have it in the pagan world, the oriental bloodless healers. But there's no promise of healing, none at all. And whatever they say is a healing is totally bogus.

Let me tell you how Jesus healed. Let me give you some - let me give you six realities about the healings of Jesus. This is a good place to do this. Number one, He healed with a word or a touch. He healed with a word or a touch. He rebukes the fever, picks her up, she's healed by His word, His touch. You find out throughout His healings, there are many of them like that.

Secondly, He healed instantly - He healed instantly. Centurion's servant, Matthew 8:13, was healed that very hour. The woman with the bleeding problem, Mark 5, as we'll see, was healed immediately. Jesus healed ten lepers in Luke 17 instantaneously. He touched the man with leprosy in Luke 5, and immediately the leprosy departed. It's always that way.

He heals with a word or a touch, not some incantations, not some formulas, a word or a touch, and He heals instantly. I've heard people say, "I've been healed and ever since I was healed I am getting better." What in the world? Jesus never did anything that made people start to get better. It was all instantaneous.

Thirdly, He healed totally. Mark 1, we just read it. She may well have been dying from infection. He rebukes the fever and she is fully functioning in full strength, no recuperation period. He didn't say to her, "Sip a little honey and water and take it easy for a few weeks." He didn't say, "Claim the healing by faith to make sure you can secure it."

Fourthly, Jesus healed everybody. He healed everyone. In Luke's account, it's the parallel to this passage, Luke 4:40, Luke says, "And while the sun was setting, all who had any sick with various diseases brought them to Him and laying His hands on every one of them, He was healing them." Every one of them - every one of them. You didn't have to qualify to make it to the healing line. You notice that people missing a limb or people paralyzed never make it to the TV healing line? Or people who have no eyeballs in their sockets? He healed everyone, absolutely everyone.

It says in verse 32, "When evening came after the sun had set, they began bringing to Him all who were ill and those who were demon-possessed." And Luke's comment on that same scene is that He healed all of them. We'll get back to that in a minute. He healed absolutely everyone. This is just one day and He did it every day. He banished illness from Israel.

Fifthly, He healed organic disease. He didn't heal lower back pain or heart palpitations or a headache or some other invisible ailment. He reversed paralysis, palsy, things that were undeniably supernatural.

So when you look at a healing the way Jesus did it, He healed with a word or a touch. He healed instantly. He healed totally. He healed everyone. He healed organic disease. And sixthly, He raised dead people. That was no more difficult than any other healing because you had to create in any case. He had to create a new limb. You had to create health where there was disease. It was all creative.

He went to a funeral in a city called Nain. Walked up to the casket, said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." And the young man rose up and began to talk. He raised the dead. I don't see the healers at the mortuary, either. Where are they? Or I don't see them at the graveyard. I don't see them in the funeral lines trying to relieve people's suffering by raising their dead. I mean it's ludicrous.

And by the way, Jesus did all of this healing in full public view every day in a different location. Not in some kind of fixed environment, high-control circumstances, but any place, any time, in any condition, any circumstance, and always in the open. Oh, and by the way, His miracles didn't require faith. Be pretty hard for dead people to have faith. "If you believe, I'll raise you." His miracles didn't require faith - virtually everyone He healed was an unbeliever.

Some of them came to faith as a result of the healing, like one out of the ten lepers, but they weren't believers when He healed them. That wasn't the point. To say to somebody, "If you have faith, you can be healed," there's no precedent for that in the Bible. His miracles were strung out through His whole ministry, not in special controlled environments or circumstances. Everywhere all the time, every day just as a routine of daily activity. And He healed everybody. There were no categories that were beyond His power.

And so He healed Simon's mother-in-law. Well, verse 32 says, that triggered a response, "When evening came, after the sun had set, they began bringing to Him all who were ill and those who were demon-possessed and the whole city had gathered at the door." Why did they wait until the sun had set? Because they couldn't carry anything on the Sabbath. So as soon as it was dusk, believe me, as soon as the sun went down over those western Galilean hills, they grabbed all the demon-possessed folks they knew, all the sick people they knew, and everybody brought everybody, and it says in verse 33 the whole city had gathered at the door - the whole city.



End of a long day, end of a long day, maybe Jesus would have liked to have rested, but in the dusk of that Sabbath evening, the people did what they could not have done any sooner because they were Sabbath-bound people. They began bringing to Him - began bringing, imperfect tense, steady stream, they just kept coming and coming and coming, all the ill, Luke says the ones with various diseases, and the demonized, the daimonizomai, the demonized, and the whole city finally ends up at the door.

This is a crowd - can you imagine looking out and looking at this crowd? All the demoniacs and all the paralyzed people and all the sick people and all the ill people and they're all jammed at the door. By the way, it is important to notice they brought all who were ill, and verse 34 says, "He healed many who were ill." Somebody might conclude, "Well, He didn't heal them all, then." Doesn't say that. It simply says that the "all" was many as opposed to a few. You know what I'm saying by that. The all were healed. Luke says He healed them all, and there were many of them who were ill, and there were many of them who had demons.

Not a small number. In fact, some take the word "many" and it's pretty consistently this way as a sort of Semitic expression, a Hebraism meaning the whole. You could apply that in other portions of the Scripture, like in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 7. But they wanted to be healed. They brought everybody.

I might add at this point that they were looking for healing and they were not looking for salvation. They were not looking so much for the - for the soul issues as the body issues. Are you surprised by that? Hey, you ask yourself the question. If you offered our generation of people in our society physical perfection, physical health, and physical wholeness or spiritual salvation, nine out of ten of them would take what? Physical - the physical. Has there ever been a generation more consumed with that than ours? They want the healing. That's nothing new.

Verse 34, they got it, He healed many. The "all who came" were many, various diseases, cast out many demons. This is just one day in a three-year power display. There are ninety, 9-0, gospel texts on healing. During our Lord's ministry, there was an unparalleled healing explosion that virtually banished disease from Israel. This one little spot on the earth, disease was banished. Never was there in history such a healing barrage.

You know, the implication of modern healers today is "God has always been a healer, and God is the healer, and He's always wanted to heal; and people of faith, they've always been able to claim their healing." That is just not true. The first healing in the Bible is in Genesis 20 at the time of Abraham - at the time of Abraham. That's 2200 B.C. That's a couple of thousand years after creation. There are no healings before that. There's a lot of other stuff, as you well know, in the opening 19 chapters of Genesis, a sweeping look at two thousand years of history, but there's no healing there.

You do have a healing in Genesis 20 and then from Abraham to Isaiah, let's go from say 2200 B.C., 2300 B.C. to Isaiah 750 B.C., that's fifteen hundred years, you can search that entire period of fifteen hundred years in the report of Scripture and find maybe twenty miraculous interventions by God that resulted in a healing - maybe twenty among the millions and millions of people who lived in the hundreds and hundreds of years that passed.

And then if you want to go from Isaiah 750 B.C. to Christ, there are no healings in Scripture. None. Not one. And during that period of time, sickness and disease were everywhere. Everybody was dying. That is why when Jesus did a miracle, the Jews responded with shock. Look at Mark 2:12, He had just healed this paralyzed man and in verse 12, man got up, picked up his pallet, his bed, and went out of the sight of everyone so they were all amazed, glorifying God saying, "We have never seen anything like this." Which is to say, "We've never heard of anything like this." Matthew 9:33, at one of Jesus' miracles, they said, "Nothing like this has ever been done in Israel."

So the idea that the healing explosion that occurred around the ministry of Jesus Christ is some kind of standard operating procedure for God among His people is just not true. Jesus had the power of healing and the power to cast out demons, and He delegated that power to two groups, the seventy who represented Him and the twelve and Paul. Why? Because they were going to preach the gospel. How do you know if what they were preaching was true? Because you had all kinds of people preaching all kinds of messages.

The ability to demonstrate power over disease and power over demonic sources, demonic powers, was to say that the message of Jesus Christ is the message of the One who has power over the physical and spiritual effects of the curse. It was a supernatural authentication of true teachers.

By the way, if God did give the gift of healing today, He wouldn't give it to people with really, really bad theology. What, would He authenticate that? You think God is authenticating Benny Hinn's theology who wrote a book that said there were nine members of the Trinity? That each member himself is a trinity himself? No, God doesn't authenticate bad theology by giving miracles to people who espouse heresy. The only people who ever did miracles were the people who were given that power by Jesus directly, the seventy and the twelve, so that their message could be authenticated, and it disappeared very fast because once the New Testament began to be written down, then any true teacher could be measured by whether he agreed with Scripture.

Today, you don't need to do any tricks to prove to me you're a true prophet. I can measure that by how faithful you are to revealed Scripture. But before the Scripture was written, these were authenticating signs. As the Scripture becomes written, as the message of the gospel becomes clear and known, healing begins to disappear.

You go into the New Testament, you get into the book of Acts, into the epistles of Paul, the general epistles, all of a sudden, guess what? Paul is sick. Trophimus is sick and Paul leaves him sick. Timothy is ill. Epaphroditus is ill. There's no mention of healing in the final pastoral epistles, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus. There's no mention of, you know, have a healing ministry. There's no promise of healing in the future.

The healing explosion was not to provide health; it was to affirm the true gospel and the true Messiah, to show His power over disease and demons, to show His power over the physical and spiritual world, to show that He had the power to conquer sin and Satan, and to rescue souls, and to show that He had the power to raise a glorified, perfect body into heaven.

In Matthew's account of this same miracle, there's one statement at the end of it that's worth noting. Matthew chapter 8. Matthew says that Jesus came into Peter's house, saw His mother-in-law lying sick in bed with a fever, touched her hand, the fever left her. She got up and served them. And when

evening came, again the same thing, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed, and He cast out the spirits with a word and healed all who were ill. Again it was with a touch or a word, that was all, and they were totally healed.

And then this closing comment, verse 17, "This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet." And what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet? Isaiah 53:4, "He Himself took our infirmities and carried away our diseases." The prophet said that He would have the power to bring our diseases, our infirmities, to an end. Will He heal all our diseases? Yeah, in the future - in the future. But He proved that He's able to do it in the future by doing it when He was here.

By the way, go back to the text in verse 34. He cast out many demons. Forget the healing gift, give you that one. Give you that one. I want the one about - I want to cast out demons. That's what I want to do. If I have a choice, I would love to do that. Could you imagine? I would go to every false cult, every false teacher, and I would say, "Come out of him," because they're all demonic, they're all - they're all basically instruments of the doctrines of demons, according to 1 Timothy 4.

All the gods of the nations are demons, the Old Testament says. Can you imagine that? Look, I - you know that I don't spend a lot of time with the cults because I think there's a greater enemy, and it comes out in this verse, verse 34. "He was not permitting the demons to speak because they knew who He was." Jesus doesn't want any affirmation from demons.

What do you mean by that? Look, the most dangerous form of religion is the religion that affirms Christ and teaches lies. I met right over there in that other building with the leaders of the Mormon church a few years ago. I met with them a couple of times. And I said, "Why are you here to meet with me?" "Because we really appreciate what you write." I said, "What do you mean?" They said, "Well, your book, The Gospel According to Jesus, we made it a textbook at BYU." What? I've got to go back and write that again.

"What are you talking about? How can it be a textbook?" "Well, we like the fact that you love Christ and you honor Christ." And they said, "Would you come to BYU and would you speak to the students and speak to the faculty?" And I said, "No." I don't - I don't need affirmation from a demonic religion that purports to represent Christ. Remember Acts 16? I mentioned it a week ago, the demon-possessed girl following Paul and saying, "Oh, he speaks for God." Get out. I don't need you. You just confuse the issue.

No, if I had the power to cast out demons - some people think they do - if I had that, I wouldn't be going over to somebody and trying to get rid of the demon of post-nasal drip or the demon of anxiety or the demon of - I'd be going to the headquarters of every false system, every false representation of Jesus Christ and I'd be saying, "Out. All of you." I don't have that authority, so I have to spend my life fighting them another way, writing books and preaching sermons and attacking all those people who falsely represent Jesus Christ.

I haven't spent a lot of time on Buddhism and Islam and Sokokuji and that kind of stuff because they don't name the name of Jesus Christ. There's no subtlety there. But when they take on the name of Jesus Christ and totally misrepresent Him, that's beyond tolerance to me and I want to silence them.

I was called by the History Channel and they said to me, "We want you to become a regular

commentary expert on the History Channel about Christian religion.” I said, “No way.” No way. You turn on the History Channel and you hear anything about Jesus Christ, the gospels, the Bible, God, you can be sure it’s a bunch of lies. I’m not going to throw myself in there with a silly smile on my face and give everybody else credibility. No. If I had the power to cast out demons, I could fix that channel.

If I had the power to cast out demons, I could fix the National Geographic Channel, too, and cast out all the demons of evolution. Jesus doesn’t want promotion from people who say good things about Him and suck people into the kingdom of darkness.

Well, so you have the proof, then, of His person in His power over demons and His power over disease. Secondly, you have the power of His action. Don’t worry, we’re going to have you out in five minutes. I know some of you looked right down at your watch and thought, “Oh, no.”

Okay, the power of His action - the power of His action. This is so obvious. Verse 35. That day is over, that one day is over. What a day, that one day is over. It’s the next morning. “In the early morning while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, went away to His secluded place and was praying there.”

Folks, it’s this simple: The power of His action was in prayer. The proof of His person was in miracles. The power of His action was in prayer. Why? Because He was subject to the will of the Father and the power of the Spirit, and so He went before the Father to seek His will and to invite the power of the Spirit of God. Critical communion and dependence on His Father.

Before the sun even comes up, He is up, indicating He’d been sleeping, that’s His humanity. He goes to a secluded place, the word is *erēmos*. It’s the word translated wilderness four times already in this chapter. Here it’s translated a secluded place, away from people. He went to pray because He was fully dependent on the Father’s will, fully dependent on the Spirit’s power.

Remember, I told you the Spirit came on Him because the Spirit intermediated between His deity and His humanity. Three times in Mark, it tells us that He went into that kind of secluded place to pray, Mark 6 and Mark 14. But He prayed all the time. You look at the four gospels, He prayed before His baptism, He prayed before calling the twelve, He prayed before feeding the multitude, He prayed at His transfiguration. He prayed before He taught the disciples how to pray. He prayed before He raised Lazarus. He prayed on the last night with His disciples in the upper room. He prayed in Gethsemane, and He prayed even hanging on the cross.

Why? Because He was subject to the will of the Father and the intermediary power of the Holy Spirit, and He placed Himself always under the Father’s power and under - under the Father’s will, I should say, and under the Spirit’s power. He prayed that all those things that were in the will of God would be accomplished. You can read how He prayed in John 17, there’s a model of His prayers right there. Communing with God was crucial to Him. He had laid aside His prerogatives as the Son of God.

That’s what Philippians 2 means when it says He emptied Himself. He didn’t give away His deity, He just gave away the free exercise of it and submitted Himself to the Father and the Spirit as a part of His humiliation. That’s why He said, “I only do what the Father tells me to do, what the Father shows

me. I only do what I see the Father do. I only do what pleases the Father. I do it in the power of the Spirit. And if you say I do it by the power of Satan as in Matthew 12, you blaspheme the Holy Spirit." Wonderful dependence on the will of God and on the power of the Spirit. That dependence is made manifest in His prayer.

One final point, the proof of His person, His miracles. The power of His action, His prayer. Finally, the priority of His mission - the priority of His mission is preaching - preaching. Look at verse 36. Simon and his companions searched for Him. They wake up in the morning, "Where is He?" They search for Him. "They found Him, and they said to Him, 'Everyone's looking for you, they're back - they're back from the night before.'" Well they brought all the sick and all the demonized, you know, and now they're back.

What are they back for? Oh, now they're moving down another dimension, you know, they've got a bad finger, they've got a bruise here, whatever's left to be attended to. They're back. Or maybe they just went further away from Capernaum and collected more people, but they're back, reminiscent of John 6 where He fed the five thousand in the afternoon. Remember that? And they were back on the other side of the lake in the morning, clamoring for a free breakfast. They're back.

Luke says, "They tried to keep Jesus from leaving Capernaum." You've got to come back. Hey, this is what we hoped for. You are popular, do you understand this? This is your moment. Wow, this is it. You've got to capitalize on this. They're all back, come on.

Verse 38, "He said to them, 'Let's go somewhere else.'" I like that. I made my point, right? It's not about everybody getting their little healing, it's about proving who I am. I've done enough to make it evident. Let's go somewhere else because somewhere else we can do it again. Let's go somewhere else, to the towns nearby. Listen to this, "So that I may preach there also, for that is what I came for." Folks, that's worth underlying.

If you ever ask why Jesus came, He came to be a preacher. "The Son of man has come to seek and to save the lost." "I am come to call not the righteous, but sinners to repentance," Mark 2:17. Here He says, "I've come to preach." How does He call sinners to repentance? How does He seek and save the lost? By preaching. That's what I came for - to preach. Remember when He went to the synagogue at Nazareth just before this event? And He came into the synagogue and He opened to Isaiah 61, "The Lord has anointed me to preach the gospel."

God only had one Son and He was a preacher. That's why He came, to preach. The miracles only verified the authority and the truthfulness of His message, but there was no salvation in the miracles, the salvation was in believing the preaching - believing the preaching.

And so, verse 39, He didn't go back to Capernaum, "He went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee." In that verse, Mark sums up weeks if not months of Jesus doing exactly what He had done in Capernaum, preaching and casting out demons. It's all about preaching, folks. I can't heal. I can't cast out demons. But I can preach. You can't heal and you can't cast out demons, but you can preach. What is - how is preaching different than teaching? It's louder. The content is the same. It's a proclamation, it has a commanding rather than a didactic nature.

So He left. This is so important. Listen to Romans 10:13, "Whoever will call in the name of the Lord

will be saved. How will they call on Him whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? How will they hear without a preacher? How will they preach unless they're sent?" No wonder it's written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news of good tidings."

Jesus was a preacher because faith comes by hearing the Word. Same passage, Romans 10. So for weeks, even months, He went from town to town and village to village, preaching and proving the truthfulness of His message by miraculous deliverances from demons and healings. Savior not only verifies who He is, but proclaims salvation through faith in His name. And so Mark pulls together these three realities that we will see played out throughout our Lord's entire ministry, a ministry of proof, a ministry of prayer, and a ministry of preaching. Let's pray.

Father, thank you again for this great text and its riveting and compelling nature. We're so blessed to know the truth. Protect - protect the name of Christ from all the charlatans and all the fakes and the phonies and the frauds who prey on people's struggles, pains, sufferings, fear, with false promises that you've never made. Silence them and lift up those who are the true preachers. Make your true Word heard, the true gospel.

Lord, we know we don't have a promise of healing in this life but we have a promise of healing in the life to come. And this life is only a vapor, appearing for a little time and vanishes away. The Christian gospel is not Jesus wants you healthy, it's Jesus wants you in heaven where there's no sickness, no sorrow, no death, no tears. Healing in the atonement? Absolutely. Eternal healing.

Father, we pray for those who might be here today who do not know Christ, who have not yet come to Him in repentance and faith. Would you work that miracle in their lives now? Would you deliver them from the power of Satan and the power of sin? Would you open their heart to understand the gospel, the beauty of Christ, the forgiveness of sin that is available simply through faith? Grant them the faith to reach out, repent, confess their sins, and embrace Jesus as Lord. Amen.

END

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