

Text: Mark 1:21-28 NAU (New American Standard, 1995 Version)



Saturday, 1/30 at 4:00 | Sunday, 1/31 at 9:00

Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany – 2021

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ: Sometimes it's important to be **ABSOLUTELY SURE**; for example:

- You're a government spy with a thyroid problem; when you take a pill, is it Levoxyl or is it cyanide?
- You're ready to walk on the glass-bottomed Grand Canyon Skywalk; will the glass hold my weight?
- You believe in heaven and hell, *and want to go to heaven*; is Jesus, God's Son, the only way to heaven?

We know that life and death issues are serious; ***how much MORE SERIOUS are the issues of eternity!***

Before we dive into today's sermon text, let's do a quick overview of **Mark 1:1-20**...

- ✓ **Vv. 1-8:** John the Baptizer prepared the way for Jesus by preaching and baptizing.

- ✓ **Vv. 9-11:** Jesus was baptized by John; then God the Father anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit *to officially make Him the Christ.*
- ✓ **Vv. 12-13:** Jesus was severely tempted by the devil, *yet He never fell into sin.* Even though the first Adam failed, *Jesus, the second Adam, prevailed!*
- ✓ **Vv. 14-15:** After John was arrested, Jesus began preaching and called everyone to ☞be sorry for his sins and ☞believe in Him as their Savior.
- ✓ **Vv. 16-20:** Jesus called His first four disciples, *who were two pairs of brothers.* First, He called Peter and Andrew; then, James and John.

Now, continuing in **Mark 1:21**, let us be **ABSOLUTELY SURE** that *Jesus is God's Son, the only way to heaven!*

1. **Jesus' Teaching Points to His Identity:** <sup>21</sup> **They went into Capernaum; and immediately on the Sabbath He entered the synagogue and *began* to teach.** <sup>22</sup> **They were amazed at His teaching; for He was teaching them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes.**
  - a. Where is Capernaum? On the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee.
  - b. Who lived in Capernaum? Jesus had moved there from Nazareth; also, Peter, Andrew, James, and John.
  - c. What was their occupation? Before Jesus called them, Peter, Andrew, James, and John were fishermen.
  - d. What day is the Sabbath? Saturday. God commanded the people to rest (not work) and focus on Him.
  - e. Who were amazed at Jesus' teaching? The people who had gathered in the synagogue. And what does it mean that they were amazed? They were astonished,

overwhelmed; Lenski wrote: “...as long as Jesus spoke, every eye and every ear were fixed on him in rapt attention, dreading to miss a single word” (73).

- f. Why were they amazed? *Because Jesus’ taught with authority!* And what does that mean? Authority is **POWER**, unlike the **powerless** words of the scribes. That **POWER** showed *whenever Jesus taught!* Lenski wrote that “**the deity of Jesus** [the fact that He is God] revealed itself in all that he said... [*then Lenski used these words to contrast the teaching of the scribes:*] ...foolish... mean... intricate with legal pettiness... concerned only about priests and Pharisees... and mostly occupied with things infinitely little” (74).

2. **Jesus’ Power Over a Demon Points to His Identity:** <sup>23</sup> **Just then there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,** <sup>24</sup> **saying, “What business do we have with each other, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us [*ruin us*]?”** I know who You are-- the Holy One of God!” <sup>25</sup> **And Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be quiet, and come out of him!”** <sup>26</sup> **Throwing him into convulsions, the unclean spirit cried out with a loud voice and came out of him.**

- a. What is an unclean spirit? A fallen angel, a demon.
- b. Will Jesus eventually ruin or destroy the demons? Yes, when He returns; *He will cast them into the lake of fire!*
- c. Should we believe that Jesus is “the Holy One of God” **because** of what the demon said? No; *demons are liars!*
- d. Did the demon obey Jesus? Yes, but he made it known to everyone that he was *very powerful and very angry!*
- e. Why did the demon obey Jesus? **Jesus is the almighty Son of God, so the demon had no choice.**

3. **Jesus' Eyewitnesses Confirm His Identity:** <sup>27</sup> **They were all amazed, so that they debated among themselves, saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him."** <sup>28</sup> **Immediately the news about Him spread everywhere into all the surrounding district of Galilee.**
- Jesus awesome teachings were followed by awesome actions; therefore, what should we conclude? Think about today's OT reading... A prophet is known to be *true* when his words *actually happen*. When Jesus – *the Son of God in human flesh*, spoke **things happened!**
  - Evil angels are super-powerful, but who is MORE powerful? God – *F, S, and HS!* James wrote: "Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you" (4:7 NAS).
  - When we witness something that is *real* and *powerful*, what is a natural reaction? We are excited and tell others! *That is what happened in Capernaum!*

**Conclusion:** **Truth**—be sure, *Jesus is the one way to heaven!*

**Relevance**—be sure to benefit from Jesus' work through repentance (*sorrow and faith*)! **Inspiration**—the past is forgiven, *so today is the first day of the rest of our lives!*

**Encouragement**—God is in control, *so let us trust and not fear regarding our nation, our health, and everything else!*

**Let Us Pray:** Father in heaven, *in the midst of being unsure about many things*, **make us sure about** ✓ the Bible being Your Word, ✓ Jesus being Your Son, ✓ us being forgiven through Jesus, and ✓ You being in control of all things!