

Discussion Questions

The Time Has Come: The Gospel of Mark

These questions are designed to invite reflection on today's Bible passage and life application of the themes introduced in today's sermon.

Week 3: *With Authority*

Mark 1:21-28, 32-34

1. Think of an authority figure from your past or present. Did they have authority because of an assigned role (e.g., teacher); a specific relationship (e.g., parent); or a set of innate characteristics? What are some differences between these three kinds of authority?
2. Today's passage illustrates the defining activities of Jesus' public ministry. What do people conclude about Him? Against whom do they compare Jesus? Is this a favorable comparison?
3. Later, the crowds draw the same conclusion about Jesus. Is it based on Jesus' words, or actions? What is it about Jesus' action that causes them to draw this conclusion?
4. Whom does Jesus encounter in the synagogue? How does this character respond to Jesus? Does his response reflect ignorance of Jesus' true nature, or unique knowledge? Does knowledge of Jesus equate to saving faith in Jesus? How do we know?
5. What does the demoniac demonstrate about a potential way to respond to Jesus? During Jesus' ministry, who else responds to Jesus this way? What do these parties have in common? In what ways is Jesus a threat – both to His demonic and human opponents?
6. What phrase does the demon utter to Jesus? In what ways do we hear echoes of that response to Jesus in our world?
7. How do irreligious people respond *wrongly* to Jesus' authority? How might religious people respond wrongly to Jesus' authority? Why do you suppose a human might allow the spiritual forces of evil to influence them?
8. According to George MacDonald, what is the "one principle of hell"?
9. How is Jesus' posture different from that of the forces of evil in our world – i.e., to whom does Jesus direct His whole life? Where did Jesus get His authority?
10. Defiance is one way to respond to Jesus. What's the other? In what way do the crowds first express this to Jesus?
11. What is the key difference between the demons' statement of fact and the Christian's statement of faith?
12. What happens when Jesus, the true authority in Creation, shows up? What are the signs in the physical world? What are the signs in human hearts?
13. If the first expression of devotion to Jesus is *submission for salvation*, what is the second? What does it look like when devoted followers of Jesus embody His authority on earth? What are some ways Jesus' authority might come to expression in your life?

Pray: Offer your entire life to the authority of Jesus; ask for Him to heal the places you are hurting and broken, and to liberate you from counterfeit authorities; invite Him to express His love and expand His kingdom through you.