

The Gospel of Mark
Part 5
Unrivaled Authority

TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS

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A publication of , the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. –Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. –Joshua 22:5

Triangle Community Church aims to be a "transforming church". We exist to be used by God as He transforms ordinary people into extraordinary followers of Jesus Christ. TCC believes not only that life-change is possible—but that it is to be expected. Growth is God's will for his people. But transformation does not happen by accident. It requires intentional, intelligent action. 1 Timothy 4:7 instructs you to "discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness." Since "Talking Points, Walking Points" is intended both for individual reflection and for group discussion, questions vary in degree of vulnerability required. Generally it is best to begin group discussions with questions which involve less personal disclosure—but don't linger there. Be sure to "dive deep" too! The questions which require the greatest openness and honesty, as well as those in the section entitled "Digging Deeper in your Daily Quiet Time", are perfect for private reflection.

Questions for Reflection or Discussion

- What from Sunday's message interested you? ...made sense to you? ...confused you? ...intrigued you? ...upset you? ...encouraged you? ...and **why?**
- Pastor Doug noted that Jesus often instructed people not to spread news about him and his power (see the **Sermon Summary** for the list of passages and for Pastor Doug's explanation of Jesus' motive). What advice would worldly-minded marketing experts likely have given Jesus? (See John 7:2-5!)

How is Jesus' desire for obscurity yet another evidence of the divine origin of the Scriptures?

- Read Mark 1:21-28. Jesus spoke with authority—literally [1] "substantively" and [2] "out of his own being" (see the **Sermon Summary**). But now read 2 Timothy 4:3-4. **Why** do you think some folks longed to hear Jesus' meaty, authoritative teaching, but others will refuse sound doctrine and instead seek out teaching that only "tickles the ear"?

Tell about the first time you heard a sermon which was "substantive and authoritative". How did it affect you?

Now tell about a time when you heard a sermon which was the exact opposite—instead of being "meaty", it lacked substance and authority or was based solely on others' credentials. How did it affect you?

Has 2 Timothy 4:3-4 ever described your heart toward the things of God? Would you tell us about it?

What caused you to begin to desire substantive, authoritative teaching from the Word of God?

According to the following passages, what heart attitude is required in order to genuinely hear from God?

Isaiah 57:15 & 66:2

Psalm 34:18; 51:17 & 138:6

Matthew 5:3-4

Sermon Summary

Key Text: Mark 1:21-28

Quick Review: Mark opens his gospel by introducing us to John the Baptist, the man God sent to introduce the Messiah and prepare the way for him. John publicly identified Jesus and baptized him. Immediately the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus and God declared from heaven: “You are my beloved son, in you I am well pleased.” Then the Holy Spirit impelled Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan for forty days. Where other Israelites had failed, Jesus succeeded. He remained faithful to God and did not sin. After John was arrested, Jesus’ first order of business was to begin assembling his disciples. Simon, Andrew, James and John were the first men. And that brings us to today’s text.

Jesus and his disciples traveled to Capernaum, an upscale town on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee. Peter lived there—and there is evidence that Jesus lived in Peter’s home after he left Nazareth. Capernaum had a tremendous fishing industry and merchants as well as a Roman colony and taxation station.

Upon his arrival Jesus entered the synagogue and began to teach—a common practice for visiting rabbis (but nothing else about Jesus’ ministry was commonplace!). The people were **amazed**—literally “terrified” at His teaching; for He was teaching them as one **having authority**, and not as the scribes (v. 22). Jesus evoked authority far beyond anything the people had experienced with the scribes. Jesus provided no footnotes, no citations, no marshaling of other people’s arguments. He was his own authority! “Authority” is a Greek word which means “out of his own being”. Jesus taught as the ultimate Supreme Being. This word also can be translated as “substance.” Jesus spoke “out of substance;” his teaching was supremely substantive. There was nothing superficial about it. Old Testament prophets prefaced their teaching with “Thus says the Lord...”, but when Jesus spoke, he spoke with the same authority as God the Father! When Jesus, the Word of God incarnate, opened His holy mouth, all present were stopped in their tracks, filled with amazement, and pierced by a sense of dread as they heard the Word of God being proclaimed with such transcendent finality. And church, this is how we should respond every time we hear the Word of God being proclaimed.

That day in the synagogue there was a man with an unclean spirit. You wonder how many times this demon-inflicted man had worshiped in the synagogue without revealing his condition. But that day he cried out. It required the presence of the Son of God to expose this demon. The demon recognized the true nature of Jesus’ authority and feared it. The demon asked him, “What do we have in common?” The answer is, of course, absolutely nothing! They represented two different realms, the realm of Satan and the realm of God. The only relationship the demons had with Jesus was one of conflict, and now they were faced with certain defeat and judgment (see Mark 3:27). This demon was terrified because he, an evil angel, was in the presence of the holy God. Fear and dread are always sinners’ response when God’s holiness is revealed (Isaiah 6:1-5; Luke 5:8). This demon feared that Judgment Day had come, when he would be thrown into the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:10).

Jesus commanded this demon to keep quiet about His identity and commanded him to come out of the man. Jesus did not want, or need, demonic assistance to tell people who He is. Notice that this demon acknowledged both Jesus’ humanity (“Jesus of Nazareth”) and his divinity (“Holy One of God”). Don’t believe people who tell you that the New Testament doesn’t present Jesus as being both God and man. It does so over and over and over again; you just have to open your eyes! News about him spread quickly throughout the district of Galilee (1:27-28), but He was always trying to keep things quiet (Mark 1:44; 3:12; 5:43; 7:36–3; 8:26 & 30; 9:9). Why? Because he didn’t want the Jews to follow him for the wrong reasons or for the Romans to think he was an insurrectionist. Jesus had a divine timetable, and he did not want to hurry that up. He knew that as his fame spread, so would opposition to him.

Well, that is the exposition; let’s consider the application for us.

I. On the basis of his words and works, embrace Jesus as the authoritative Son of God.

If Jesus really is God in the flesh, then we have an important decision to make. Jesus said, “I am the way and the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father but through me.” Jesus wasn’t bragging. He was merely speaking the truth. Have you responded? How will you respond? Amazement is not the response Jesus is looking for. He wants you to embrace him as Savior and Lord. He gave you ample evidence which Mark details in his gospel. Don’t make the same mistake that the first century Jewish leadership made.

II. Jesus commands us to tell others about him (whereas before his death, Jesus discouraged this).

Consider the irony of this: Jesus warned his first century listeners **not** to tell anyone who he was (3:12), but what did they do? They told everyone! He tells us to preach the gospel to all creation (16:15), and what do we do? We keep quiet! We have the answer to man’s deepest questions, the solution to man’s deepest problems—and we keep it to ourselves (Romans 10:8–15). We have been sent! We have the good news—we just need to share it.

Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

"Five Question Bible Study" (see page below) is a simple way to study any topic. Hebrews 5:14 says that **"substantive, authoritative teaching"** is solid food that will help you discern good and evil, so grab a fork and let's dig in!

Monday—Read Psalm 19:7.

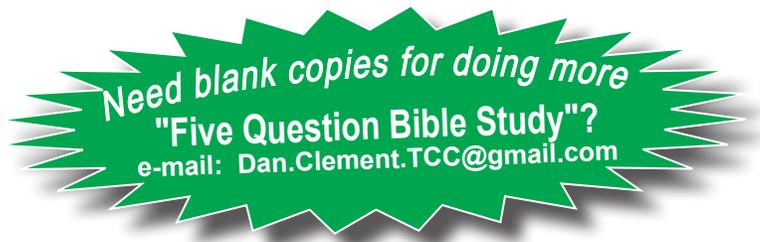
Tuesday—Read Psalm 19:8.

Wednesday—Read Psalm 19:9.

Thursday—Read Psalm 19:10.

Friday—Read Psalm 19:11-12.

Saturday—Read Psalm 19:13-14.



Five Question Bible Study

Bible Text: _____ Date: _____



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) it is found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text? [and what was their response?]