

Something New: Authority

Scripture Reading — Mark 1:21-28

“What is this? A new teaching—and with authority!” — Mark 1:27

When Jesus comes on the scene, something new happens. Our hope, our longing for change, takes on a different shape. Hurting people, sinful temptations, human brokenness, and disease are con-fronted with -authority.

The people in this story recog-nized Jesus' authority in regard to two specific things: his teaching and his power over impure spirits (demons). There was something about Jesus that made him different from the other religious teachers of his day. In fact, this is the first thing mentioned in Mark's gospel about Jesus' public ministry: it was a ministry of authority.

We often long to witness the authority of Christ confronting diseases, financial hardships, broken friendships, and injus-tices of all kinds today. But we do not pause as often to -consider the spiritual dimensions of our suffering. The apostle Paul reminds us that "our struggle is not against flesh and blood" (Ephesians 6:12). Rather, we contend with demonic powers that want us to think that our circumstances, not our hearts, are the problem.

It's worth noting that Jesus' teaching, not just his healing, triggered a reaction from the crowds. But "being amazed," by itself, is not a response to authority. Jesus' teaching demands either submission or rebellion. He calls us to bring our hurts, our diseases, and our hearts under his authority. How will you respond?

Prayer

Jesus, you rule over all things by your Word and Spirit. Enter our lives with your authority today, we pray. Amen.

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