



***Sermon-Based Study Guide***  
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*Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church ♦ January 24, 2010*

**Sermon Title: Kingdoms Colliding**

Sermon Text: Mark 1:21-34

Related Texts: Genesis 2:15-3:19; Ephesians 6:10-12

Jesus has begun to preach a most provocative message – “The time has come, the Kingdom of God has arrived, turn from your expectations about this Kingdom and believe the good news.” Mark is concerned that his readers understand the true nature of the Kingdom of God and of the Messiah as understood and demonstrated by Jesus. That’s why Mark immediately begins to describe Jesus’ activities and the responses they elicit.

**I. Start It – Connecting With One Another**

Have you ever met a celebrity? Were you intimidated? Nonchalant? What was that experience like?

**II. Study the Text –Read the Gospel of Mark 1:21-34**

- 1) The action begins on a Sabbath day in the synagogue in Capernaum (north shore of the Sea of Galilee). Synagogues were places for Jews to meet, pray, read and study scripture, and learn from teachers who would expound the meaning of the scriptures read. According to verse 22 Jesus’ teaching elicited quite a response. What kind of authority do you think Jesus demonstrated? How does it differ from the other teachers of the Law? Why would the people be “amazed” by this?
- 2) Verse 23 begins “just then” (it’s that familiar Greek term “euthus” that we have seen translated “at once” and “immediately”). Immediately following Jesus’ teaching (or as he was teaching) there is another response. How is the man in the synagogue described? How does the evil spirit respond to Jesus and his teaching? What does the question “have you come to destroy us?” imply about 1) the power of the Kingdom of God versus the powers of evil and 2) Jesus’ power over evil?

**Note:** Genesis 2:15-3:19 describes the events surrounding our ancestors being lured by an evil personage, ignoring God’s instructions, and acting in defiance to God out of a rebellious self-will. The “Tempter” is the one that the Bible describes by using the name “Satan” – from the Hebrew word for “adversary.” Satan is the chief among a throng of fallen angelic beings (the New Testament refers to Satan, or the Devil, or Beelzebub, and a legion of demons aligned with this being). Throughout the Bible, these fallen angels engage in activities that are 1) hostile to God, 2) working to overthrow God’s purposes, 3) seeking to torment and destroy human beings, and 4) being completely opposed to the good news of the gospel. The in-breaking of the Kingdom of God (God’s rule in human hearts and in the world) collides with the forces that stand opposed to it. These evil forces – as understood in the first century – 1) caused both physical and mental disease, 2) tormented people by seizing some facet of their personality and influencing their behavior (demon possession) – seeking to

destroy human beings, and 3) sought to undermine the ministry of Jesus. The Kingdom of God is here – with Jesus – and it immediately collides with this kingdom of evil. Though The Adversary is disarmed and ultimately defeated (See Colossians 2:13-15), the forces that are contrary to the will of God are still active in the world. The collision of the Kingdom of God with the forces of evil continues today. Yet, one day all evil will be eradicated.

- 3) Verses 24-26 imply that the demon knows Jesus (and the Kingdom of God) will destroy him/it and the dominion of The Adversary. The demon also uses Jesus' name – thought to be a way one would gain power over another. In response, Jesus commands the spirit to be quiet and to come out of the man. Notice when and where this “exorcism” takes place. What does this “exorcism” suggest about Jesus' authority over evil spirits and over all powers? Why do you think Jesus commands the evil spirit to “be quiet!”?
- 4) Look at verse 27. The crowds are amazed – in awe – of Jesus “a new teaching and with authority.” What kind of authority are they seeing? How does Jesus' teaching challenge the dominion of the forces of darkness? How does his power break that dominion?
- 5) Look at verses 29 and 30. After the time in the synagogue – time for the main meal of the Sabbath day – the group makes its way to Simon's home. How does Mark describe the way Jesus healed Simon's mother-in-law? How does this contrast to the means of casting out the demon described in verses 23-26?
- 6) According to verses 31-34, after the end of the Sabbath, people brought all the sick and demon-possessed and Jesus healed and drove out many evil spirits. What do you think Mark wants his readers to grasp about Jesus by describing this scene?
- 7) How do these things – Jesus teaching with an unprecedented authority, Jesus exercising authority over demonic spirits, and Jesus exercising authority over disease – begin to explain or describe what the Kingdom of God is like? How do they describe what kind of Messiah Jesus is?

### **III. Apply It -Reflect and Respond**

**Reflect:** Read Ephesians 6:10-18. We can err by denying the existence of evil forces or to think too much about them (causing fear and powerlessness). How can you stand against evil forces?

**Respond:** Followers of Jesus have the opportunity to continue to “proclaim good news” by doing what Jesus did – speaking about the Kingdom of God and demonstrating it. How will you be faithful to proclaim good news – in word and deed??

### **IV. Pray It - Responding in Prayer**

**Prayer Requests:** How can your group pray for you?

**Prayer for our Community and World:** Please pray for Good Shepherd to be used by God to proclaim good news – in word and deed