

Lesson 5 28 August 2011

Jesus, the Mighty Son of God

Lesson Scope: *Mark 4:35-5:43*

Lesson Focus

Just prior to the accounts of this lesson, Jesus demonstrated His power over nature. The disciples were very surprised and impressed with His control over the wind and waves on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus' demonstrations of His power were great faith-strengthening experiences.

Satan's efforts to hinder Jesus in His purpose are evident in the extensive demon activity among the people. Jesus used these opportunities to demonstrate God's matchless power. He proved that He is the mighty Son of God by allowing the people to continually witness new dimensions of His power.

Though Jesus is not with us in a bodily form today, He still provides plenty of evidence of His omnipotence and sovereign control over the universe. Nothing is too hard for Christ. Regardless of one's circumstances, need, or dilemma, Christ is more than equal to it.

In our finite minds, we are awed at times by powerful machines of man's invention. We relate more easily to power that we can measure by standards such as horsepower and torque. Powerful machines are impressive because they were designed by men and demonstrate human genius. This kind of power pales when we observe displays of God's power in natural phenomena.

Perhaps the reason Christ's infinite power is not displayed through miraculous healing so much today is because many would not give Him the glory for it. Some would take the credit to themselves and their supposed great faith. We do believe, however, that Christ still has that ability and uses it at times.

May we be inspired with Christ's displays of power as seen in nature and in His ability to convert a sinner into a saint.

Lesson Aim: To be inspired by Christ's infinite power.

Theme Verse: *Mark 4:41.* And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

Lesson Text

Power Over Demons

Mark 5:1. And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes. ^{2.} And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, ^{3.} Who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: ^{4.} Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him. ^{5.} And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones. ^{6.} But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, ^{7.} And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not. ^{8.} For he said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit.... ^{12.} And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. ^{13.} And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;) and were choked in the sea.... ^{15.} And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.

Power Over Disease

Mark 5:25. And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, ^{26.} And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, ^{27.} When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. ^{28.} For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. ^{29.} And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of the plague. ^{30.} And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? ... ^{33.} But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. ^{34.} And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

Power Over Death

Mark 5:35. While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house certain which said, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further? ^{36.} As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only

believe....⁴¹. And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise.⁴². And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment.⁴³. And he charged them straitly that no man should know it; and commanded that something should be given her to eat.

Questions for Study

Power Over Demons

1. Contrast the power of the demoniac with the power of Christ.
2. Enumerate the changes Jesus produced in the life of this man.
3. How does the plight of the demoniac illustrate the bondage of sin?
4. How does Jesus' miracle illustrate the new birth?

Power Over Disease

5. What does the term straightway communicate to us in Mark 5:29?
6. Why did Jesus bring the fact of this healing into the open?
7. What was the value of the woman's confession in Mark 5:33?
8. Does a lack of physical healing indicate a lack of faith? Explain.

Power Over Death

9. Why did Jesus allow the damsel to die? Compare Mark 5:23 and 36.
10. How do we benefit from Christ's power over death as evidenced by His own resurrection?

Analyzing the Passage

From a human standpoint, each of these three situations was hopeless. The healing in each situation was not only a display of power but also an evidence of Jesus' compassion and interest in each person.

Devil(s) (Mark 5:12, 15) refers not to Satan himself but to his demons, also referred to as unclean spirits.

Virtue (Mark 5:30) literally means "miraculous power." Straightway (5:29) denotes that this healing was not a gradual process but instantaneous, proving the divine power involved.

Talitha cumi (Mark 5:41) were the actual Aramaic words Jesus used. Mark translates them for the benefit of his Greek-speaking audience.

Jesus charged the girl's parents "that no man should know it." Perhaps Jesus' intent was to stifle His own popularity so that He would not draw so many curious onlookers, who would hinder Him from finding and helping those who were needy.

Principles and Applications

Power Over Demons

1. Evil spirits acknowledge the identity, power, and authority of Jesus (Mark 5:6-7). Not only did the unclean spirit know exactly who Jesus was, but he also knew Christ's intent—to send him out and free the man. Although this acknowledgement did not come from a sincere, repentant heart, but from an evil spirit which cannot repent, it did serve as a witness to the people of who Christ really is. Evil spirits' awareness of Christ's power is the reason they "believe, and tremble" (James 2:19).

2. Demons are subject to the limitations that Christ places upon them (Mark 5:12). Satan's demons had overpowered and possessed this man. When confronted by Christ, however, the demons had no choice but to leave, and they begged Jesus to spare them from immediate doom by allowing them to enter the swine.

Satan is much more powerful than man, but he is not infinitely powerful as God is. Satan can go no further than God allows. God still places a "hedge" about those who serve Him to protect them from the onslaughts of Satan and his demons. The Christian can anticipate the time when Satan will no longer have even limited power but will be put under forever.

3. The power of Christ can effect complete change in a person's life (Mark 5:15). The vastly different behaviors of a demon-filled man and a Holy Spirit-filled man are indicative of the desires of Satan and God. Satan wants to destroy but God desires to save. The change in the demoniac's behavior was complete and irrefutable.

God is in the transforming business yet today. Every person who gives his life over to God experiences a spiritual metamorphosis. There is no one who has gone too far into sin to turn around and appropriate God's mercy and grace. God empowers each believer to live above sin and to be victorious over temptations. This change will affect one's appearance, his speech, his attitudes, his interpersonal relationships, and most importantly, his attitude toward and desire for spiritual things.

Power Over Disease

4. Jesus is aware of the dispensing of His power (Mark 5:30). His knowledge of the woman's act was not because of a weakening effect caused by the dispensing of power. Rather, Christ was aware of it because of His omniscience. Just as certainly as He knows every secret act of sin, He also knows every secret act of faith.

When any sincere seeker calls on God in faith, Christ hears and intercedes on his behalf. God has promised in His Word that those who seek Him will

find Him. God's greatest desire is to save all who will come to Him and acknowledge their need of Him.

5. Christ's power is accessed by faith (Mark 5:34). True faith is evidenced by an expectant, believing attitude. The hopeless woman said in her thoughts, "If I may touch but His clothes, I shall be whole." She did not say "I may be better" but rather "I shall be whole." Christ chose to reward her faith with more than she was hoping for. Her fear and trembling were replaced with peace.

Faith links one to Christ's infinite power to deliver. Though God does not always choose to grant physical healing, He always honors the request for spiritual healing. The works produced by one who is spiritually cleansed provide the primary evidence God gives today of His infinite power.

Power Over Death

6. Jesus offers reassurance when circumstances seem hopeless (Mark 5:36). His words to Jairus came at the precise moment of need, and they strengthened his faith in Christ.

Today, Christ reassures His children through His Word and through other people. His Spirit guides so that reassuring words come at the right time. His promise in John 14:16-18 is still true today. The knowledge of His infinite power gives reassurance even in seemingly hopeless situations.

7. The spoken word of Christ accomplishes His will (Mark 5:41). All nature is subject to the Word of Christ. Just as the spoken word brought life into existence, so Christ's words had the authority to bring life from the dead.

8. Death yields to Jesus' power (Mark 5:42). His power caused an instantaneous result. This proves that this was a miracle and not a physical process requiring time.

Christ claimed the victory over death once and for all when He rose from the dead to live eternally. Through faith, the saint looks forward to life beyond the grave. In this life, Christ's power makes it possible for one to experience victory over spiritual death and to live in newness of life (Romans 6:4).

Important Teachings

1. Evil spirits acknowledge the identity, power, and authority of Jesus (Mark 5:6-7).
2. Demons are subject to the limitations that Christ places upon them (Mark 5:12).
3. The power of Christ can effect complete change in a person's life.

(Mark 5:15).

4. Jesus is aware of the dispensing of His power (Mark 5:30).

5. Christ's power is accessed by faith (Mark 5:34).

6. Jesus offers reassurance when circumstances seem hopeless. (Mark 5:36).

7. The spoken word of Christ accomplishes His will (Mark 5:41).

8. Death yields to Jesus' power (Mark 5:42).

Answers to Questions

1. Contrast the power of the demoniac with the power of Christ.

Many demons had overpowered this one man, taking total control of him and giving him supernatural strength. Christ possessed power that even these many demons could not withstand. The demoniac was powerful, yet limited; Christ's power is infinite.

2. Enumerate the changes Jesus produced in the life of this man.

He was in his right mind instead of being subject to demons. He was now calmly sitting with Jesus instead of dwelling among the tombs, wildly and uncontrollably crying and abusing himself. He was now clothed. He now had a sincere expression of appreciation for Jesus instead of the forced, insincere acknowledgment of the demons.

3. How does the plight of the demoniac illustrate the bondage of sin?

He was in bondage to Satan and could not help himself. His own evil was damaging to himself and made him repulsive to others. His living among the tombs could perhaps typify being dead in sin. Sin is ensnaring. The longer one is involved in it, the harder he gets wrapped in Satan's web. Sin affects not only one's self but many others also. Both the plight of the demoniac and the bondage of sin are hopeless situations apart from the power of Christ.

4. How does Jesus' miracle illustrate the new birth?

Jesus' miracle brought a complete and irrefutable change in the behavior of the man. There was no question in the minds of the onlookers what had happened here. The world should see an obvious change as well when a sinner is converted. As did Jesus' miracle, the new birth brings changes that affect one's appearance, speech, interpersonal relationships, and desire for spiritual things.

5. What does the term straightway communicate to us in 5:29?

The term straightway means "immediately or instantaneously." This healing was strictly a miracle—complete and instantaneous. It involved no physical or chemical processes that would have required time and

progression.

6. Why did Jesus bring the fact of this healing into the open?

Perhaps Jesus wanted the woman to see that it was not His garment that did the healing but her own act of faith that did it. Most certainly Christ wanted her faith to be a testimony to those around them. He also wanted to reward her faith with peace. She went away a very different person indeed.

7. What was the value of the woman's confession in 5:33? She gave her testimony of what Christ had done for her. This turned all glory to the One to whom it was due.

8. Does a lack of physical healing indicate a lack of faith? Explain.

No. God's primary goal is to save men from sin. Sometimes He uses the suffering saint to bring conviction and salvation to sinners. God may receive more glory from the testimony of one who is patiently enduring physical illness or pain than from a miracle of healing. A lack of healing may be for one's own good. See Paul's testimony regarding his thorn in the flesh (2 Corinthians 12:7-9).

9. Why did Jesus allow the damsel to die? Compare 5:23 and 36.

Christ wanted to challenge the ruler's faith further to make him into a believer. Christ also wanted to be accepted as more than a miraculous healer but also as the Son of God. It helped the ruler to see his personal need of Christ. It was a testimony of Christ's divinity to the observers.

10. How do we benefit from Christ's power over death as evidenced by His own resurrection?

The resurrection brought to fruition God's plan of salvation, which makes possible our living above sin and spiritual death. We can live in newness of life and anticipate a glorious future after this life.

Summarizing the Lesson

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25). The most profound display of Christ's power is His ability to save all men. His limitless abilities provide a sense of security for the Christian.

"If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31).

Research Guide

1. Study the word omnipotence and references related to it in a Bible dictionary.

2. In *Doctrines of the Bible*, read "Part 1—The Doctrine of God," especially the chapter titled "His Being and Attributes."