

Conversations with Jesus

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Mark 1:21-39

Followers

To attract followers, a strong leader communicates vision clearly and uses authority wisely. Power with compassion draws more and more followers.

1. What qualities do you admire in a leader?

At about age 30, Jesus left his carpenter shop in Nazareth and began to preach, ***“The time has come. The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news.”*** As he traveled along the Sea of Galilee, he chose Simon, Andrew, James, and John, four commercial fishermen, to follow him as his first disciples.

Jesus’ brief stay in Capernaum demonstrates his authority, power, and compassion. Crowds of people are drawn to him, but notice how he remains focused on his vision and purpose.

Read Mark 1:21-28

2. Why are people amazed as Jesus teaches in the synagogue?

3. What incident adds to their amazement?

4. Why might Jesus have commanded the evil spirit to be quiet?

5. If you had been in the synagogue that morning, what would you tell your friends who had not been there?

Read Mark 1:29-34

6. What awaits Jesus, Simon, Andrew, James, and John as they arrive at Simon and Andrew's home?

7. How does Jesus deal with the situation?

8. What effect does the news of Jesus' authority and power have on the whole town?

Note: Jewish law prohibited carrying anything or walking unnecessarily on the Sabbath, from sunset Friday until sunset Saturday.

9. What impresses you about the way Jesus uses his power and authority?

From the perspective of the people of Capernaum, in what ways is Jesus different from other teachers?

Read Mark 1:35-39

10. Following his eventful Sabbath, when and where does Jesus go?

How does Jesus explain his actions?

11. What is Simon and his companions' agenda for Jesus?

How does this contrast with Jesus' stated mission?

12. Imagine yourself in this situation. Your friends and neighbors admire you and want you to continue working on their behalf. You must choose either to please them or to adhere to a higher priority. How would you decide what to do?

13. Jesus was not choosing between good and evil but between good and best. Why is this such a difficult choice?

14. What does verse 39 demonstrate about Jesus' compassion as he pursues his purpose of preaching in other areas?

REFLECTION

1. If you were a resident of Capernaum, what would attract you to Jesus as a leader? What would be challenging for you to accept?

2. The following discussions will provide more detail about Jesus' purpose on earth, but from this study, what do you see as Jesus' primary purpose?

3. How would having a clear purpose in your life affect how you live?

CONCLUSION

Jesus amazed the people in Capernaum with his teaching, his authority over demons, and his ability to heal various diseases. How convenient it would have been to stay in Capernaum where he was warmly received and where he was welcomed into the homes of his disciples. But Jesus knew why he was here, and he was clear about his priorities.

As you reflect on what you learned about Jesus in this passage, tell him about the areas of your life that need his healing touch. You could also ask for wisdom and courage to choose the best, even when others pressure you to settle for less.