

**Read: Mark 1:21-28**

## There's Power When Jesus Speaks

### **Mark 1:21-28**

They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an impure spirit cried out, "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!"

"Be quiet!" said Jesus sternly. "Come out of him!" The impure spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek.

The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, "What is this? A new teaching—and with authority! He even gives orders to impure spirits and they obey him." News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee.

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Seven-year-old Lucas took his dog Skipper for a walk. Skipper was a big dog. In fact, Skipper was twice as big as Lucas! As they were walking on the sidewalk in front of his house, a rabbit suddenly ran out from underneath a shrub. "Uh-oh," Lucas thought, "This is trouble." He immediately took a deep breath and said as loudly as he could, "STAY BOY!" Amazingly, Skipper stayed. Skipper stood still, looked up at Lucas, and began to wag his tail. Lucas knelt down next to him, wrapped his arms around him, and praised Skipper. "Good boy," he said over and over. Then Skipper gave Lucas a great big sloppy kiss on the cheek.

If Skipper hadn't listened and took off after the rabbit, what do you think would have happened to Lucas? You're right, he would have been dragged behind him. Skipper was much stronger than the boy. But he had also been trained to listen to that one command, "STAY!"

There is no way you can take the devil for a walk on a leash. He is so much more powerful than we are. Too often, we can't even control ourselves. We think that if we just try hard enough we will never sin again. But the devil loves to tug us toward temptation. Sin has a powerful pull on us. It is so hard to control.

But when Jesus speaks, the devil and his evil spirit must listen. Today's Bible reading proves it! And when Jesus speaks about *you*, he says that you are a child of God. That means something coming from Jesus. It is a promise that has power behind it. Even the devil himself has to listen and submit. He cannot do anything to take you away from Jesus.

Oh yes, the devil will try to tug you away from Jesus. He will shriek and holler and tell lies. He will try to get you to believe that you don't need Jesus or his Word in your life. Don't listen to him! Listen to Jesus and his Word. He can command, "Be quiet!" or "Come out!" or "Go away!" and evil has no choice but to obey him.

When Jesus speaks to us today, all the authority of God has been given to him. When Jesus speaks, the devil and his armies fall in terror. When Jesus speaks, his sheep listen to his voice and know they are safe.

Don't ever stop listening to Jesus!

*The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.*

### **Questions for the Younger Children**

- Where can we still hear Jesus speak to us today?
- God is omnipotent, which means he is all-powerful. Make a list of at least three things that God has power over. How do you feel knowing that God is in charge of all things?

### **Questions for Elementary Age Children**

- Jesus demonstrated power over an evil spirit by simply speaking. What does that tell us about the power of God's Word we have in the Bible?
- Think of a problem you are facing in your life right now. How does this Bible reading help remind you of God's ability to help you in any situation?

### **Questions for Middle School and Above**

- Jesus came to earth to defeat sin, death, and the devil. In this reading, Jesus demonstrated his authority over an impure spirit from the devil. Where did Jesus also show his power over sin and death during his ministry on earth?
- Apply today's Bible story to your life. Think of something bad or evil that you feel powerless to change. With it in mind, pray the Lord's Prayer and especially keep in mind the petition, "Deliver us from evil."

### **Closing Prayer:**

Thank you, Jesus, for speaking powerfully to us in your Word. Amen.