



# RESOURCES

Mark



St Philips

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This series is called KINGDOM PEOPLE.

We'll be looking at the first 9 chapters of Mark's gospel and the series will take us on a journey of discovering who Jesus is and who God says we are; we'll see that the Kingdom work of Jesus reveals to us the character of God; we'll think about the enemy's opposition to the Kingdom and our authority in Christ as Kingdom People to rebuke and defeat him; and we'll learn that walking in great authority and power is not about finding a formula but about intimacy and sacrificial love.

Timing: 20-40 minutes, then leading into prayer/ministry

Buzzgroups: Groups of 3-4 work best, there are feedback notes for the speaker

Illustrations: Where relevant, suggestions are made but speaker's own stories are preferable

Approach: Use these resources to curate and steer group discussion, rather than seeing this material as a talk to delivery straight.

Trust the group discussion to create an environment for mutual growth, deepening relationships and intimate encounter with the Spirit. Feel free to tailor and pitch the talk as best suits your group.

"Go Deeper": Suggestions for deeper exploration are noted.

Ministry notes: Follow the Spirit but suggestions are included if desired.

# Mark

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## WEEK 2 AUTHORITY

Last week we considered that the foundation of our identity in Christ is that we are adopted children of God and that we have an inheritance through the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

### Introduction

In the last session (Mark 1:1-13 - Who Does God Say We Are?) we looked at Jesus' baptism and what it has to say about His identity and our identity.

In this session we explore Jesus' authority to advance the Kingdom of God and deliver people from sickness and the enemy, and how our identity as children of the same Father bestows on us the same authority.

*Our authority flows out of who we are as daughters and sons of God.*

### Read: Mark 1:14-45

### The Ministry of Jesus

The baptism narrative ended with the Spirit taking Jesus into the desert to be tempted. Our passage today picks up this narrative as Jesus returns from the desert and begins His public ministry. He gathers His disciples (vs 16-20) and travels through Galilee, announcing: "The Kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!" (v. 14).

In the remainder of chapter 1 we see what the Kingdom of God looked like to Jesus:

- **He taught with authority**
- **He delivered people from evil spirits**
- **He healed the sick**
- **He prioritised relationship with His Heavenly Father**

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### Buzzgroups:

Discuss in groups of three (3 minutes): What does the Kingdom of God look like to you? Have you ever prayed for anyone who was healed or received healing yourself - physically, emotionally or spiritually? What happened? What did it feel like? Any other examples?

Feedback (3 minutes): try to draw out some encouraging stories that will help the group begin thinking about what the Kingdom looks like when God involves us in its advance. It is a good opportunity to get the group excited about the times in their lives when they saw God at work and to think about how He uses us for His purposes. (Use a personal story).

### 1. Teaching with Authority

Teaching was a significant part of Jesus' ministry and in Capernaum He taught at the synagogue. We read that they were amazed at His teaching because He taught "as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law" (v. 23). Why was Jesus' teaching so different? Why did it carry such authority? There are some clues in the Gospel of John:

"For I did not speak on my own, but the Father who sent me commanded me to say all that I have spoken." (John 12:49); and "Jesus answered, 'My teaching is not my own. It comes from the one who sent me.'" (John 7:16).

Jesus received His teaching from His Father. He taught with authority because He was sharing the revelation that He received through His relationship with God.

Note the difference between knowledge *about* God and knowledge *of* God. The teachers of the law had lots of knowledge about God and yet they carried no authority.

Jesus spoke out of His knowledge of God because He was speaking out of His relationship with His Father.

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### Buzzgroups:

Discuss in groups of three followed by feedback (3 minutes): How can we be confident in telling others about the Kingdom of God? How can we teach with authority?

Feedback (3 minutes): note that the first buzzgroup was an opportunity to speak about our own experiences. Speaking about our experiences of God is called testimony. It is a personal account of our relationship with Abba. There is no stronger, more attractive, more impactful or more authoritative way of speaking than out of our relationship with, and experience of, our Heavenly Father.

Like Jesus, we will also speak with authority as we share what the Father has personally taught us. We are to teach others out of the *overflow* of our relationship with God – hearing His voice, meditating on his Word and encountering His presence. What we know of Him, not just what we know about Him. (Share an example of when you grew in your knowledge of God).

## 2. Demonstrating Authority

Jesus did not just teach with authority - He also demonstrated His authority: "For the Kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power" (1 Corinthians 4:20). Jesus backed up His teaching with miracles such as healing the sick and driving out evil spirits.

### a) Driving out evil spirits

At vs 23-26 we read of an encounter with an impure spirit: "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."

In this confrontation the evil spirit immediately recognised three things - who Jesus was, the authority He carried and why He had come. It knew that Jesus was the Son of God and that He carried authority to destroy the Kingdom of darkness: "The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work". (1 John 3:8)

We will also destroy the works of the enemy as we walk in *identity* and *authority* and purpose.



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### b) Healing the Sick

Vs 29-34 are full of examples of Jesus healing the sick: Simon's mother-in-law, the man with leprosy and, we read at v. 34, "many who had various diseases". As well as having authority over the enemy, Jesus also had authority over physical sickness including serious diseases such as leprosy. Jesus was moved with compassion towards those who were suffering and healed them.

In healing the sick Jesus demonstrated *the heart of His Father*. When we look into the face of Jesus we see the Father: "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9); and "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being" (Hebrews 1:3).

*Everything Jesus did revealed the true nature of the Father to those around Him.*

### **Buzzgroups:**

Discuss in groups of three followed by feedback (3 minutes): Do we use our authority over sickness and evil spirits? If not, why not?

Feedback (3 minutes): this is a tough question but try to encourage honesty and openness. It is an opportunity to explore together some of the reasons why we do not always walk in the authority given to us. For some it might be fear, for others past disappointment, and for others a lack of faith. It may simply be outside the normal Christian experience of some. It is really helpful to discuss these things openly and with a light touch. Close the discussion by encouraging everyone that we will now look at how we can begin to walk in the authority given to us as God's children.

### **3. Believer's Authority**

Jesus had complete authority over the enemy and over sickness. We too are entrusted with great spiritual authority. This authority flows from Identity, Position and Submission.

#### a) Authority flows from **Identity**:

Jesus was given authority by the Father because He was God's Son. His ministry started after His identity was affirmed at His baptism: "This is my son, whom I love, with whom I am well pleased." - see Session 1. Jesus knew the Father's love and in the same way we should also know who we are as loved sons and daughters: "See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of

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God!" (1 John 3:1). When we are confident in our identity we will operate in spiritual authority with confidence.

(Go Deeper: If you did not cover Session 1, it might be worth while exploring some of that material here).

### b) Authority flows from **Position**:

The Father raised Jesus from the dead "and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come." (Ephesians 1:20-21) Jesus is now positioned on a throne in heaven far above every other authority. Jesus has been given the highest authority.

When we are born again, adopted by Abba, we join Jesus on that same throne: "And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus." (Ephesians 2:6). We are now seated with Christ in the heavenly realms in a position of great authority. We are seated far above all fear, sin, sickness and all the power of the enemy. Knowing our position on that throne with Christ gives us the confidence to exercise the spiritual authority we've been given.

### c) Authority flows from **Submission**:

As He walked on earth Jesus was completely obedient to God, submitting to His Father's authority. "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me." (John 6:38) His prayers were heard due to His "reverent submission" (Hebrews 5:7). When we live in submission to the Father we are entrusted with greater spiritual authority. Those who want to wield authority must learn to honour authority.

### **Buzzgroups:**

Discuss in groups of 3 (3 minutes): which of the three headings above is most difficult for you? Identity, position or submission?

Feedback (1 minute): note that there will be an opportunity in the ministry time to pray into these areas and ask the Spirit to clear away any blockages in these areas so that people can walk into greater authority.

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### 4. Time with our Father

Towards the end of chapter 1 we discover the secret of Jesus' ministry:

"Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. Simon and his companions went to look for him, and when they found him, they exclaimed: "Everyone is looking for you!" (Mark 1:35-37)

Jesus had so many potential distractions. He was surrounded by people in great need, all of whom looked to Him for answers. Yet despite this He would get up early to find a quiet place to seek God. He prioritised prayer. His relationship with the Father was the most important thing to Him.

Jesus' ministry was born out of His intimacy with Father God. Everything we do should also flow out of our prayer life and relationship with our heavenly Father. Why is this?

a) We will know his Heart:

As we spend time with the Father we will begin to understand His heart. Jesus understood His Father and every part of His ministry reflected His Father's nature. Jesus healed the sick because that was His Father's heart. He ministered to the poor because that was His Father's heart. He set people free from oppression because that was His Father's heart. When we know the Father we can represent Him well to others and our actions will reflect His heart.

b) We will rely on Him:

When we let go of distractions and draw close to the Father in prayer we start to rely on His strength and wisdom rather than our own. Jesus was completely dependent on the Father: "The Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does." (John 5:19) Jesus was led by the Spirit in all that He did and we are to follow that pattern: "The children of God are led by the spirit of God" (Romans 8:14).



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### Buzzgroups:

Discuss in groups of three (5 minutes): Is the goal of our lives intimacy with Father God? If not, what is the goal of our lives? How can we grow in relationship with the Father?

Feedback (5 minutes): The goals of our lives reflect the priorities of our lives. Encourage a discussion about the goals/deepest desires of the people in the room. Very often the deepest desires of our hearts are placed there by our Father. They are, therefore, often a doorway to greater intimacy with Him.

As we engage with and pursue the God-given desires of our hearts, we begin to cultivate a heart like His. It may be justice, family life, evangelism, hospitality. (Give a personal example to encourage conversation). Suggest that the group presses into these things in the ministry time in a few moments.

### Conclusion

Jesus the Son provides a model of how we can all live as sons and daughters of God. He shows us what the Kingdom of God looks like as it flows through us.

His life was defined by **Identity - Intimacy - Authority - and Love**

- We are called to walk in Identity – knowing we are loved sons and daughters of our heavenly Father.
- We are called to walk in Intimacy, spending time in prayer with our heavenly Dad, sharing our hearts and listening to His.
- We are called to walk in Authority – advancing the Kingdom of God by healing the sick, casting out evil spirits and teaching others with great authority.
- We are called to walk in Love – loving each other out of the overflow of the Father's great love for us.

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### Prayer/ministry

Ministry is most effective when it flows from conversations within the Home Group during the evening and the Spirit's witness.

- Consider using the ministry time to engage with people's heart's desires. Invite the Spirit to reveal the Father's heart for those areas. In small groups, lay on hands and minister identity, position and submission to those areas. Ask the Spirit to show you what it looks like to pursue the things the Father has put on your hearts. Seek words of knowledge, scriptures and prophetic pictures.
- Pray into the areas of identity, position and/or submission and ask the Spirit to clear away any blockages in these areas so that people can walk into greater authority.
- Ask the Spirit to give the group a download of the Father's heart - for love, compassion and authority. You may want to worship again or soak to music.