

Jesus the One with authority.

Introduction. John the Baptist announces the significance of the coming of Jesus, 'the kingdom [rule] of God has come near.' The rule of God is made known in Jesus Christ.

1. Vv. 21-22. The authority of Jesus' teaching is a manifestation of the rule of God. Jesus' teaching reveals that his authority comes from God; 'And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."' (v.11). It is Jesus' authority which is most often challenged by the religious leaders and demonic/evil spirits or forces.

2. Vv. 23-26. To be ready to acknowledge Jesus as Lord and to come under his and therefore God's rule, a person must be ready to repent. ¹⁵"The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news! But instead of acknowledging Jesus' authority and repenting to come under his rule the impure spirit challenges Jesus and seeks to exercise control over Jesus. In correctly 'naming' Jesus as the 'Holy One of God' the evil (impure) spirit probably believed he could exercise power over Jesus. But the authority of the Son of God is seen in his silencing of the evil spirit. Jesus further shows his authority over the evil spirit by commanding it to come out of the man. Immediately the evil spirit is compelled to come out of the man.

3. Vv. 27-28. The crowd's response further emphasises the authority of Jesus, 'A new teaching-and with authority! He even gives orders to evil spirits and they obey him'. The text tells us nothing more about the man from whom the evil was exorcised nor anything more about the evil spirit. The focus is on Jesus and his authority and power. Mark finishes this section by reporting that news about what Jesus was teaching and doing was spread through the whole region of Galilee. This way Mark keeps the focus on Jesus addressing the question who is this person and how should people respond to him?

Reflection/Response.

The crowd's response of amazement needs to go further.

Are we ready to accept Jesus' authority by repenting and trusting in him as our Lord?

What does it mean to live under the authority Jesus?

How would people know and see we are living under the authority of Jesus?

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