



Sunday School Lesson
Mark 1:21-39
 by Lorin L. Cranford
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Early Ministry in Galilee



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This second study in the Gospel of Mark of the five in the Smyth-Helwys Formations series focuses on three separate episodes in the first chapter of the gospel. Parallels in Matthew and Luke are present but in an uneven manner, with Luke following Mark more closely at this point.

These verses contain the narration of a series of events that took place early in Jesus' public ministry. For Mark these early events become a defining pattern for the next couple of years of activity in the northern region of Palestine.

our passage in 1:21-39.

a. Historical

The **external history** of the Markan gospel focuses upon the early church tradition that placed John Mark as the composer of this document. This tradition reaching back to Papias and as quoted by Eusebius places Mark in Rome in the 60s just prior to the execution of the apostle Peter. The gospel is understood to be a reflection of Peter's recollections of Jesus' life and ministry that Mark put in writing

I. Context

Because of previous studies on Mark, relevant background materials from those studies will be used in this lesson.

a. Historical

In a recent study on Mark 12:28-34, a detailed exploration of the external history of Mark was attempted, as well as the literary relationships between Mark and the other gospels. The reader is referred to [that study](#) for greater details. In this lesson we will simply summarize the high points of that study and add new elements that emerge from



<http://www.keyway.ca/htm2002/index.htm>

either before or just after Peter's martyrdom at the hands of the Roman emperor Nero. Modern scholarship has been cautious about accepting all aspects of this tradition, since hardly any of them can be proven objectively from corroborating evidence. Internal analysis from a narrative critical methodology provides a somewhat different perspective suggesting that the writer of this material was situated in either Galilee or north of there possibly in Antioch. At least, the narrational vantage point places both the narrator

and the reader here geographically. For example, when elsewhere Jesus always comes to Galilee in Mark, he doesn't go to Galilee. This in contrast to Luke, who places the narrator and reader in Jerusalem and thus Jesus always goes to Galilee.



54), and Jairus, the ruler of the synagogue, whose daughter Jesus restored to life (Mark 5:41–42). Another resident was the converted tax collector, Levi (also called Matthew; cf. Matt. 9:9 par. Mark 2:14), who invited business associates and

In regard to the **internal history** of 1:21-39, the geographical setting is Capernaum. This village was “a city on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee (Matt. 4:13), where Jesus based much of his ministry. It was the location of a tax office (Matt. 9:9), and a contingent of soldiers commanded by a centurion was stationed there (Luke 7:2)” [A.C. Myers, *The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary*, rev. ed., p. 190]. The ruins of the Jewish synagogue continue to exist to today, as the above photo illustrates. Myers also describes the NT significance of the village:

Jesus called Capernaum “his own city” (Matt. 9:1). Here, too, presumably close to the synagogue, was the home of Peter’s mother-in-law (Matt. 8:14 par. Mark 1:29; Luke 4:38). A paralytic who wished to be healed was lowered through the roof of a house in Capernaum where Jesus was staying (Mark 2:1–3), perhaps the home of Peter and Andrew. In the same city lived the centurion whose servant Jesus healed of paralysis (Matt. 8:5–13 par. Luke 7:1–10), the official whose son he healed (John 4:46–

sinner to dine with Jesus. Once, addressing a very large crowd on Capernaum’s shoreline, Jesus had to teach from a ship in the harbor (Matt. 13:2 par.).

Although Jesus performed many mighty works in Capernaum — themselves cause for local pride (Matt. 11:23 par. Luke 10:15) — he also warned the city’s inhabitants of potential humiliation and perhaps punishment for failure to repent (cf. Matt. 11:23–24).

From Capernaum Jesus went to a deserted area to pray in solitude (vv. 35-38), and from there to a preaching tour throughout the Roman province of Galilee (v. 39). He would return to Capernaum after this tour (2:1): “When he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home” (NRSV).

b. Literary

The literary context for 1:21-39 is interesting, especially in comparison to Matthew and Luke. From my outline of [the life of Christ](#), one can see the setting of our passage better.

	Matthew:	Mark:	Luke:	John:
I. Background and preparation for ministry	1:1-2:23 (4%) ²	1:1-2:52 (11%)	1:1-18 (2%)	
II. Beginning of public ministry	3:1-4:11	1:1-13	3:1-4:14	1:19-4:54
III. Galilean ministry	4:12-18:35 (51%)	1:14-9:50 (53%)	4:14-9:56 (24%)	4:46-7:9 (15%)
A. Phase One: To the Choosing of the Twelve	4:12-12:21	1:15-3:19a	4:14-7:50	4:46-5:47
17. Prophetic preaching 4:12-17	04. The Gospel of the Kingdom 1:14-15	21. Popular teaching 4:14-15	John doesn't describe these events.	
18. Four fishermen called 4:18-22	05. Four fishermen called 1:16-20	22. Rejection at Nazareth 4:16-30		
19. Preaching and healing tour in Galilee 4:23-25	06. Sabbath exorcism at Capernaum 1:21-28	23. Sabbath exorcism at Capernaum 4:31-37		
20 - 47. Sermon 5:1-7:29	07. Peter's mother-in-law and others healed 1:29-	24. Peter's mother-in-law and others healed 4:38-		
48. Leper cleansed 8:1-4				
49. Centurion's servant				

- healed 8:5-13
50. Peter's mother-in-law healed 8:14-17
 51. Conversation with would-be follower 8:18-22
 52. Calming the storm 8:23-27
 53. Gadarene demoniacs healed 8:28-34
 54. Paralytic healed and forgiven 9:1-8
 55. Calling of Matthew 9:9-13
 56. Question about fasting 9:14-17
 57. Ruler's daughter and a woman healed 9:18-26
 58. Two blind men healed 9:27-31
 59. Mute demoniac healed 9:32-34
 60. Tour of Galilee with compassion for people 9:35-38
 61. The Twelve chosen 10:1-4

34

08. Preaching and healing tour in Galilee 1:35-39
09. Leper cleansed 1:40-45
10. Paralytic healed and forgiven 2:1-12
11. Calling of Levi 2:13-17
12. Question about fasting 2:18-22
13. Plucking grain on the Sabbath 2:23-28
14. Man with withered hand healed 3:1-6
15. Withdrawal and more healings 3:7-12
16. The Twelve chosen 3:13-19a

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25. Preaching tour in Galilee 4:42-44
26. Four fishermen called 5:1-11
27. Leper cleansed 5:12-16
28. Paralytic healed and forgiven 5:17-26
29. Calling of Levi 5:27-32
30. Question about fasting 5:33-39
31. Plucking grain on the Sabbath 6:1-5
32. Man with withered hand healed 6:6-11
33. The Twelve chosen 6:12-16



From just a quick glance at the sequence of events in each of the synoptic gospels, one can see that Matthew and Luke have their own distinctive way of describing this part of Jesus' ministry. The beginning of public ministry in Galilee is marked by very similar pericopes: Matt. (#17); Mk. (#04); Lk. (#21). A high point of the first phase of his ministry, the calling of the Twelve becomes the place where the three gospel writers come back together in their stories. Most likely this material covers the first year of Jesus' activities in Galilee.

On the assumption that Matthew and Luke had access to Mark's gospel, the distinctives of these two writers becomes even more evident. Luke will follow the Markan sequence more than Matthew does. With the three pericopes of our study, the sequence is exactly the same as Mark's. Matthew only picks up the healing of Peter's mother-in-law. The exorcism and possibly the preaching tour are omitted by Matthew. However, Matthew does narrate two preaching tours by Jesus; one in 4:23-35 (#19) and the other in 9:35-38(#60).

What one should conclude from this is that a strict chronological sequence in telling the story of Jesus is not a concern for the gospel writers. Each has another, more important objective.

Mark's objective here is well summarized by J.R. Edwards in the *Pillar NT Commentary*:

The introduction to Jesus' Galilean ministry in 1:16-45 exhibits Mark's economy of style by splicing several episodes together with only brief connectives ("and,"

"immediately," "then," etc.) and with little or no editorial comment. Equally Markan, we learn through a variety of encounters (calls, exorcisms, healings, and travels) who Jesus is by what he *does*. In the synagogue in Capernaum, Mark demonstrates the authority of Jesus by showing what happens when a man with an unclean spirit meets the One anointed with God's Spirit. The story combines two episodes that make the same point. In the first, Mark shows that Jesus teaches with unique *authority*, unlike and indeed surpassing that of the scribes (vv. 21-22). The second part is an account of an exorcism (vv. 23-26). Both episodes are knit together by v. 27, in which Mark notes that all the people—and he emphasizes *all*—are astonished, for the authority by which Jesus expels a demon is the same authority by which he teaches. The combined stories demonstrate that *Jesus' word is deed*.

The picture of decisive authority that can be confrontational, where needed, emerges clearly from this Markan text.

The **literary genre** of this passage is diverse. Two miracle narratives and a summary narrative make up this material. But the two miracle narratives are distinctive. The first one is an exorcism and the second is a healing narrative. More will be said about each under the exegesis below. Collectively, however, these forms underscore even further the authority of Jesus. That authority extends to the demonic world (vv. 21-28), then to fever ridden disease (vv. 29-34). It is not confined to the village of Capernaum in northern Galilee; instead, it is expressed throughout Galilee in the preaching tour

(vv. 35-39).

II. Message

As described above, the natural division of vv. 21-39 is either into a threefold pattern, or possibly into four parts, if a division between the solitary prayer experience (vv. 35-37) and the actual preaching tour (vv. 38-39) is to be made. We will follow the threefold division in our study.

a. Exorcism, vv. 21-28

Greek NT

<1:21> Καὶ εἰσπορεύονται εἰς Καφαρναοῦμ· καὶ εὐθὺς τοῖς σάββασιν εἰσελθὼν εἰς τὴν συναγωγὴν ἐδίδασκεν. <1:22> καὶ ἐξεπλήσσοντο ἐπὶ τῇ διδαχῇ αὐτοῦ· ἦν γὰρ διδάσκων αὐτοὺς ὡς ἐξουσίαν ἔχων καὶ οὐχ ὡς οἱ γραμματεῖς. <1:23> καὶ εὐθὺς ἦν ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ αὐτῶν ἄνθρωπος ἐν πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ καὶ ἀνέκραξεν <1:24> λέγων, Τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ Ναζαρηνέ; ἦλθες ἀπολέσαι ἡμᾶς; οἶδά σε τίς εἶ, ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ. <1:25> καὶ ἐπετίμησεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγων, Φιμώθητι καὶ ἐξελθε ἐξ αὐτοῦ. <1:26> καὶ σπαράξαν αὐτὸν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἀκάθαρτον καὶ φωνῆσαν φωνῇ μεγάλῃ ἐξῆλθεν ἐξ αὐτοῦ. <1:27> καὶ ἐθαμβήθησαν ἅπαντες ὥστε συζητεῖν πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς λέγοντας, Τί ἐστὶν τοῦτο; διδαχὴ καινὴ κατ' ἐξουσίαν· καὶ τοῖς πνεύμασι τοῖς ἀκαθάρτοις ἐπιτάσσει, καὶ ὑπακούουσιν αὐτῷ. <1:28> καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ἡ ἀκοὴ αὐτοῦ εὐθὺς πανταχοῦ εἰς ὅλην τὴν περίχωρον τῆς Γαλιλαίας.

NASB (1977):

^{21a}And they went into Capernaum; and immediately on the Sabbath ^bHe entered the synagogue and began to teach. ²²And ^athey were amazed at His teaching; for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. ²³And just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, ²⁴saying, ^a"What do we have to do with You, Jesus ¹of ^bNazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are—^cthe Holy One of God!" ²⁵And Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!" ²⁶And throwing him into convulsions, the unclean spirit cried out with a loud voice, and came out of him. ²⁷And they were all ^aamazed, so that they debated among themselves, saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him." ²⁸And immediately the news about Him went out everywhere into all the surrounding district of Galilee.

NRSV:

²¹They went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. ²²They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. ²³Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, ²⁴and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." ²⁵But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" ²⁶And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. ²⁷They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He¹ commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." ²⁸At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

NLT:

²¹Jesus and his companions went to the town of Capernaum. When the Sabbath day came, he went into the synagogue and began to teach. ²²The people were amazed at his teaching, for he taught with real authority — quite unlike the teachers of religious law. ²³Suddenly, a man in the synagogue who was possessed by an evil¹ spirit began shouting, ²⁴"Why are you interfering with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One sent from God!" ²⁵Jesus cut him short. "Be quiet! Come out of the man," he ordered. ²⁶At that, the evil spirit screamed, threw the man into a convulsion, and then came out of him. ²⁷Amazement gripped the audience, and they began to discuss what had happened. "What sort of new teaching is this?" they asked excitedly. "It has such authority! Even evil spirits obey his orders!" ²⁸The news about Jesus spread quickly throughout the entire region of Galilee.

Notes:

The first narrative centers on an episode that took place on the Jewish sabbath in a synagogue. Very likely it was the same one as pictured here.

The sabbath began at sundown on Friday and concluded at sundown on Saturday. The sabbath service would have been on Friday evening. By the beginning of the Christian era scribal Judaism had devised a huge number of regulations about what activity was permitted and what was forbidden during a sabbath. Thus, anyone claiming to represent God would surely know these laws and, more importantly, would be strictly committed to observing them. Jesus' disregard for this established religious tradition is at the center of the controversy over him, that will begin during this beginning ministry. This action of Jesus became one of the beginning challenges to that religious tradition.

Initially, Jesus began teaching, once he had entered the synagogue (vv. 21-22): ²¹They went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. ²²They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." Jewish synagogue worship centered around prayer and the reading of the Hebrew Bible. At a certain point in the worship individuals would be invited to make comments on what had been read. Sometimes they might have also been invited to read the prescribed biblical text for that week.

Mark doesn't provide details about what Jesus



Mark 1:23-28

²³Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, ²⁴and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." ²⁵But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" ²⁶And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. ²⁷They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." ²⁸At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

Luke 4:33-37

³³In the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, ³⁴"Let us alone! What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." ³⁵But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" When the demon had thrown him down before them, he came out of him without having done him any harm. ³⁶They were all amazed and kept saying to one another, "What kind of utterance is this? For with authority and power he commands the unclean spirits, and out they come!" ³⁷And a report about him began to reach every place in the region.

said. The Lukan paralleled (4:31-32) follows Mark very closely: ³¹He went down to Capernaum, a city in Galilee, and was teaching them on the sabbath. ³²They were astounded at his teaching, because he spoke with authority." Thus Luke doesn't give us any more details than does Mark. The common point between them is the astonished reaction of the listeners. This is echoed

by Matthew in his depiction of the people to Jesus' teaching of the Sermon (Mt. 7:28-29): ²⁸Now when Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were astounded at his teaching, ²⁹for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes."

Like a breath of fresh air, Jesus declared God's will out of the scripture with spiritual persuasion and depth of insight gleaned out of his own life. The scribal approach was to appeal to famous rabbis as the authority for their interpretation of scripture. Most likely a part of the surprise of the people grew out of their awareness that Jesus wasn't trained in scribal ways of interpreting sacred texts, and thus they did not expect to hear the depth of understanding that Jesus presented to them.

But Mark doesn't linger on Jesus as a teacher. He quickly pushes us to see Jesus as an exorcist. Verses 23-28 describe Jesus casting out an unclean spirit from a man present in the congregation of Jewish worshippers that day. Luke narrates this as well, and we can better understand by seeing both texts standing along side each other.

Ancient exorcist narratives follow the standard pattern of need, miraculous action, results. The “need” part is in vv. 23-24, where the demonic spirit interrupts Jesus as he was teaching with an effort to reveal Jesus’ “secret” of being God’s Holy One. Note that this is prompted by the fear that Jesus had come to destroy the demonic (cf. “us” in v. 24). Ancient miracle workers, especially in Jewish and Greco-Roman patterns, tended to work off of possessing some secret power that enabled them to do their miracles. Typically, this was tied to a secret name or a magical set of words that actuated this extraordinary power. To have their secret exposed risked losing that power. This is the assumption made by the demonic here in Mark and Luke.

The demon’s attempt to expose Jesus and thus prevent him from exercising authority over all of them was met with total failure. Jesus merely uttered his command, “Be silent, and come out of him!”, and the demon had no choice but to leave the man. He did manage, however, to “pitch a fit” as he was leaving the man, and this resulted in convulsions and screaming by the man. Luke 4:35 emphasizes that no harm was done to the man. What happened next is not recorded, apart from the astonished reaction

of the people to what they had witnessed.

Not only were Jesus’ words in teaching powerful, but now his words of command to a demon demonstrated power. No one should be surprised by Mark’s and Luke’s concluding statements about the rapid spread of Jesus’ fame throughout Galilee.

What can we learn from this? No end exists to modern debate over whether or not demons exist. Or whether such passages represent an ancient version of what we label mental illness. Still one has but to open up the pages of the morning newspaper to read about human actions so vile and destructive that the presence of supernatural evil in our world is clear. People can come under the spell of such evil and commit acts of violence against others, as well as themselves, that cannot be accounted for apart from the control of the Devil over their lives.

The message of these verses to our day is the authority of Jesus over that evil world. It is superior and unmatched by the Devil. But that power also provides profound insight into God’s truth based upon His Word. Jesus stands as our final interpreter of God’s will. As such we Christians must be prepared to obey our Lord’s words.

b. Healing Fever, vv. 29-34

Greek NT

<1:29> Καὶ εὐθὺς ἐκ τῆς συναγωγῆς ἐξελθόντες ἦλθον εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν Σίμωνος καὶ Ἀνδρέου μετὰ Ἰακώβου καὶ Ἰωάννου. <1:30> ἡ δὲ πενθερὰ Σίμωνος κατέκειτο πυρέσσουσα, καὶ εὐθὺς λέγουσιν αὐτῷ περὶ αὐτῆς. <1:31> καὶ προσελθὼν ἤγειρεν αὐτὴν κρατήσας τῆς χειρός· καὶ ἀφῆκεν αὐτὴν ὁ πυρετός, καὶ διηκόνει αὐτοῖς. <1:32> Ὁψίας δὲ γενομένης, ὅτε ἔδυ ὁ ἥλιος, ἔφερον πρὸς αὐτὸν πάντας τοὺς κακῶς ἔχοντας καὶ τοὺς δαιμονιζομένους· <1:33> καὶ ἦν ὅλη ἡ πόλις ἐπισυνηγμένη πρὸς τὴν θύραν. <1:34> καὶ

NASB (1977):

^{29a}And immediately ¹after they had come ^bout of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with ²James and John. ³⁰Now Simon’s mother-in-law was lying sick with a fever; and immediately they spoke to Him about her. ³¹And He came to her and raised her up, taking her by the hand, and the fever left her, and she ¹waited on them. ^{32a}And ^bwhen evening had come, ^bafter the sun had set, they *began* bringing to Him all who were ill and those who were ^cdemon-possessed. ³³And the whole ^acity had gathered at the door.

NRSV:

²⁹As soon as they¹ left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ³⁰Now Simon’s mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. ³¹He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them. ³²That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. ³³And the whole city was gathered around the door. ³⁴And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit

NLT:

²⁹After Jesus left the synagogue with James and John, they went to Simon and Andrew’s home. ³⁰Now Simon’s mother-in-law was sick in bed with a high fever. They told Jesus about her right away. ³¹So he went to her bedside, took her by the hand, and helped her sit up. Then the fever left her, and she prepared a meal for them. ³²That evening after sunset, many sick and demon-possessed people were brought to Jesus. ³³The whole town gathered at the door to watch. ³⁴So Jesus healed many people who were sick with various

ἔθεράπευσεν πολλοὺς κακῶς ἔχοντας ποικίλαις νόσοις καὶ δαιμόνια πολλὰ ἐξέβαλεν καὶ οὐκ ἤφιεν λαλεῖν τὰ δαιμόνια, ὅτι ἤδειςαν αὐτόν.

³⁴And He ^ahealed many who were ill with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and He was not permitting the demons to speak, because they ¹knew who He was.

the demons to speak, because they knew him.

diseases, and he cast out many demons. But because the demons knew who he was, he did not allow them to speak.

Notes:

Here all three synoptic writers intersect one another in describing this situation. Before we begin examining Mark closely, let's get all three narratives on the table for comparative study.

Mt. 8:14-17

14 When Jesus entered Peter's house, he saw his mother-in-law lying in bed with a fever; 15 he touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she got up and began to serve him. 16 That evening they brought to him many who were possessed with demons; and he cast out the spirits with a word, and cured all who were sick. 17 This was to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah, "He took our infirmities and bore our diseases."

Mark 1:29-34

²⁹As soon as they¹ left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ³⁰Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. ³¹He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them. ³²That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. ³³And the whole city was gathered around the door. ³⁴And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

Luke 4:38-41

³⁸After leaving the synagogue he entered Simon's house. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked him about her. ³⁹Then he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. Immediately she got up and began to serve them. ⁴⁰As the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various kinds of diseases brought them to him; and he laid his hands on each of them and cured them. ⁴¹ Demons also came out of many, shouting, "You are the Son of God!" But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Messiah.

Several things pop out at us with a close reading of these three texts. Matthew uses Peter's Greek name, Peter, while Mark and Luke use the Jewish name, Simon. All three indicate that the woman was Peter's mother-in-law, clearly indicating that Peter was married, and had his mother-in-law staying with him. While Matthew and Luke say [the house](#) belonged to Peter, Mark indicates that Peter's brother, Andrew, shared the home with him, presumably with his family as well. Two families living in one house strongly suggests a level of wealth beyond the typical.

The need present was the danger that fever caused to this woman. Medicine in that world was very primitive. Fevers posed serious, life-threatening risks most of the time. Additionally, she was be-



loved by one of the disciples of Jesus. Beyond Mark and Matthew's use of πυρεσσούω (burning = fever), Luke uses more graphic language, συνεχόμενη πυρετῶ μεγάλῳ (synechomene pureto megalō = being consumed by a high fever).

The healing action of Jesus is described differently by the gospel writers, according to their desired emphasis. Mark says Jesus took her by the hand, helping her sit up. As she did, the fever left her. Matthew says that Jesus touched her hand and the fever left her, and then she got up. Luke has the most graphic depiction. Jesus stood over her, rebuked the fever, which then left her. She subsequently got up.

All three accounts stress that she began serving them (or *him*, in Matt.). The common verb here,

διακονέω (diakoneo), means preparing and serving food. Thus she showed her gratitude by doing what was easiest for her.

Verses 32-34 summarizes the larger impact of this miracle, as well as the previous one in the synagogue (most likely). Every sick person in Capernaum sought healing. A large crowd of people gathered at Peter's house. The gospel writers indicate that Jesus accommodated their desires with healing actions, including exorcising demons. Unlike in the synagogue, where the demon had tried to expose Jesus' identity by calling him the Son of the Most High, here Jesus prohibited the demons from speaking. This is another reflection on his authority, which sought to

c. Prayer & Preaching, vv. 35-39

Greek NT

<1:35> Καὶ πρωῒ ἐννυχα λίαν ἀναστὰς ἐξῆλθεν καὶ ἀπῆλθεν εἰς ἔρημον τόπον κάκει προσήυχετο. <1:36> καὶ κατεδίωξεν αὐτὸν Σίμων καὶ οἱ μετ' αὐτοῦ, <1:37> καὶ εὔρον αὐτὸν καὶ λέγουσιν αὐτῷ ὅτι Πάντες ζητοῦσίν σε. <1:38> καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς, Ἔγωμεν ἀλλαχοῦ εἰς τὰς ἐχομένας κωμοπόλεις, ἵνα καὶ ἐκεῖ κηρύξω εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ ἐξῆλθον. <1:39> καὶ ἦλθεν κηρύσσων εἰς τὰς συναγωγὰς αὐτῶν εἰς ὅλην τὴν Γαλιλαίαν καὶ τὰ δαιμόνια ἐκβάλλον.

NASB (1977):

^{35a}And in the early morning, while it was still dark, He arose and went out and departed to a lonely place, and ^bwas praying there. ³⁶And Simon and his companions hunted for Him; ³⁷and they found Him, and said to Him, "Everyone is looking for You." ³⁸And He said to them, "Let us go somewhere else to the towns nearby, in order that I may ¹preach there also; for that is what I came out for." ^{39a}And He went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, ¹preaching and casting out the demons.

NRSV:

³⁵In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. ³⁶And Simon and his companions hunted for him. ³⁷When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." ³⁸He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." ³⁹And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

NLT:

³⁵Before daybreak the next morning, Jesus got up and went out to an isolated place to pray. ³⁶Later Simon and the others went out to find him. ³⁷When they found him, they said, "Everyone is looking for you." ³⁸But Jesus replied, "We must go on to other towns as well, and I will preach to them, too. That is why I came." ³⁹So he traveled throughout the region of Galilee, preaching in the synagogues and casting out demons.

Notes:

This final segment continues the narrative of Peter's house but carries us to the next day. Again, we need to take at Luke's side of the story for a fuller picture.

Mk. 1:34-39

³⁵In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. ³⁶And Simon and his companions hunted for him. ³⁷When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." ³⁸He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." ³⁹And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

Luke 4:42-44

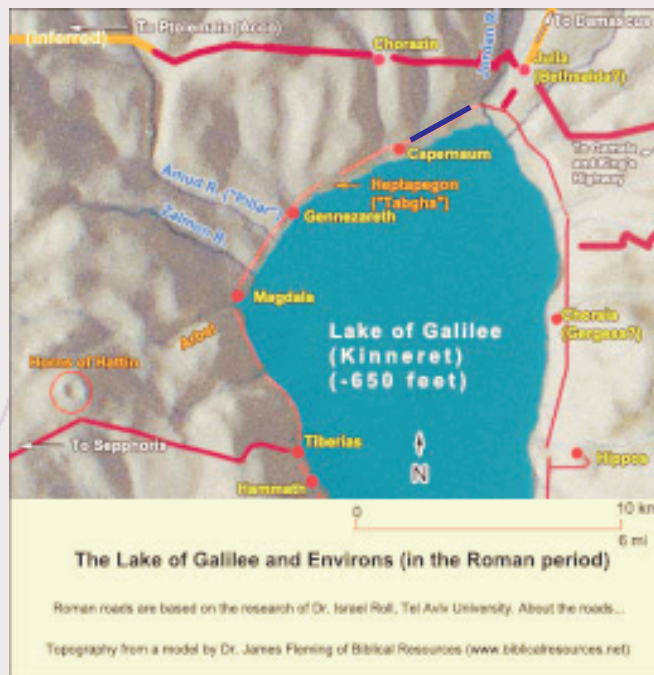
42 At daybreak he departed and went into a deserted place. And the crowds were looking for him; and when they reached him, they wanted to prevent him from leaving them. 43 But he said to them, "I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other cities also; for I was sent for this purpose." 44 So he continued proclaiming the message in the synagogues of Judea.

Once more we are confronted with differing perspectives between Mark and Luke. Mark stresses that Jesus got up much before sunup and left Peter's house to go away from people in order to pray. Where this might have been is difficult to say with certainty. Probably it was somewhere around the northern tip of the Sea of Galilee northeast of Capernaum.

When everyone else arose that morning they discovered Jesus missing. Mark says that Simon and those with him -- Andrew, James and John at least [cf. Mk. 1:19] -- sought to find Jesus. But Luke says the crowds sought to find Jesus. Mark indicates that Peter's search was prompted the needs and searching of the crowds. Both the people and Peter wanted Jesus to come back to Capernaum and continue ministry there, since not all had had their needs met.

Jesus, however, had a larger vision of more people needing his ministry than just around Capernaum. This had been the plan all along. Luke casts the response more directly as God's commissioning of Jesus (v. 43): "I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other cities also; for I was sent for this purpose." The will of the Heavenly Father constantly guided Jesus in the decisions about where to go and what to do. The disciples, along with the people receiving his ministry, quite naturally focused on their immediate needs and a small geographical area. All too often human needs in front of us can cloud our vision of a larger ministry that must be sought after as well.

Thus Mark declares that "he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons." Here is where the sharpest contrast with Luke surfaces, since Luke says, "So he continued proclaiming the message in the synagogues of Judea." One must resist the temptation to combine these accounts with the view that both Galilee and Judea were included in this preaching tour before Jesus returned to Capernaum (cf. Mk. 2:1 & Lk. 5:1). Modern readers are not the first to notice this vari-



ance. Some early manuscript copies of the Lukan text were altered to read "synagogues of Galilee" rather than the most likely original "synagogues of Judea." The later the dating of the manuscript copies, the greater the tendency to "correct" the text with Galilee.

I. Howard Marshall (Luke v. 1 in the *New International Greek Testament Commentary*) has a helpful summation of the issues:

In place of Γαλιλῆας (read, by assimilation to

Mk., in A D Θ f13 pm latt sy^p bo^{pt}; TR) he has Ἰουδαίας. This can hardly refer to the southern district of Judaea, as distinct from Galilee (*pace* Conzelmann, 33-35); it is improbable that a ministry in the south should be interpolated here (cf. Jn. 2:13-3:36; Grundmann, 126). Schürmann, I, 256f., uses the verse to justify his distinction between the beginning of the ministry in Galilee (3:1-4:44) and its main course in Judaea as a whole (5:1-19:27). He is right in seeing that Judaea here means Palestine as a whole *including* Galilee (1:5 note), but it is questionable whether so sharp a distinction should be drawn between the two parts of Jesus' ministry. Rather v. 43 indicates that Jesus' ministry is directed to the Jews as a whole; the point is theological rather than geographical.

The best that we can conclude is that Luke's overriding concern to project Jesus' ministry in relation to Jerusalem in Judea is at the heart of his modification of his Markan source.

But in either case the ministry of Jesus combined both teaching and healing and covered extensive territory before he returned back to Capernaum. His authoritative ministry was shared with a maximum number of people so as to give more the opportunity to hear and respond to God's message.

One of the current buzz words in American culture at the moment is "global thinking." Americans are beginning to realize that they are a part of a larger world community, economically, politically etc. But Christians worldwide have known for centuries that they are a part of a global enterprise. Christian mission work, preaching the gospel to all nations -- all this has its roots in the example and words of Jesus.

Greek NT

<1:21> Καὶ εἰσπορεύονται εἰς Καφαρναοὺμ· καὶ εὐθὺς τοῖς σάββασιν εἰσελθὼν εἰς τὴν συναγωγὴν ἐδίδασκεν. <1:22> καὶ ἐξεπλήσσοντο ἐπὶ τῇ διδαχῇ αὐτοῦ· ἦν γὰρ διδάσκων αὐτοὺς ὡς ἐξουσίαν ἔχων καὶ οὐχ ὡς οἱ γραμματεῖς. <1:23> καὶ εὐθὺς ἦν ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ αὐτῶν ἄνθρωπος ἐν πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ καὶ ἀνέκραζεν <1:24> λέγων, Τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ Ναζαρηνέ; ἤλθες ἀπολέσαι ἡμᾶς; οἶδά σε τίς εἶ, ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ. <1:25> καὶ ἐπετίμησεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγων, Φιμώθητι καὶ ἔξελθε ἐξ αὐτοῦ. <1:26> καὶ σπαράξαν αὐτὸν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἀκάθαρτον καὶ φωνῆσαν φωνῇ μεγάλη ἐξῆλθεν ἐξ αὐτοῦ. <1:27> καὶ ἐθαμβήθησαν ἅπαντες ὥστε συζητεῖν πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς λέγοντας, Τί ἐστὶν τοῦτο; διδαχὴ καινὴ κατ' ἐξουσίαν· καὶ τοῖς πνεύμασι τοῖς ἀκαθάρτοις ἐπιτάσσει, καὶ ὑπακούουσιν αὐτῷ. <1:28> καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ἡ ἀκοὴ αὐτοῦ εὐθὺς πανταχοῦ εἰς ὅλην τὴν περιχώρον τῆς Γαλιλαίας.

<1:29> Καὶ εὐθὺς ἐκ τῆς συναγωγῆς ἐξελθόντες ἦλθον εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν Σίμωνος καὶ Ἀνδρέου μετὰ Ἰακώβου καὶ Ἰωάννου. <1:30> ἡ δὲ πενθερὰ Σίμωνος κατέκειτο πυρέσσουσα, καὶ εὐθὺς λέγουσιν αὐτῷ περὶ αὐτῆς. <1:31> καὶ προσελθὼν ἤγειρεν αὐτὴν κρατήσας τῆς χειρὸς· καὶ ἀφῆκεν αὐτὴν ὁ πυρετός, καὶ διηκόνει αὐτοῖς. <1:32> Ὀψίας δὲ γενομένης, ὅτε ἔδν ὁ ἥλιος, ἔφερον πρὸς αὐτὸν πάντα τοὺς κακῶς ἔχοντας καὶ τοὺς δαιμονιζομένους· <1:33> καὶ ἦν ὅλη ἡ πόλις ἐπισυνηγμένη πρὸς τὴν θύραν. <1:34> καὶ ἐθεράπευσεν πολλοὺς κακῶς ἔχοντας ποικίλαις νόσοις καὶ δαιμόνια πολλά ἐξέβαλεν καὶ οὐκ ἦφιεν λαλεῖν τὰ δαιμόνια, ὅτι ᾔδεισαν αὐτόν.

<1:35> Καὶ πρῶτ' ἔννυχα λίαν ἀναστάς ἐξῆλθεν καὶ ἀπῆλθεν εἰς ἔρημον τόπον κάκεϊ προσήχετο. <1:36> καὶ κατεδίωξεν αὐτόν Σίμων καὶ οἱ μετ' αὐτοῦ, <1:37> καὶ εὔρον αὐτόν καὶ λέγουσιν αὐτῷ ὅτι Πάντες ζητοῦσίν σε. <1:38> καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς, Ἔγωμεν ἀλλαχοῦ εἰς τὰς ἐχομένας κωμοπόλεις, ἵνα καὶ ἐκεῖ κηρύξω· εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ ἐξῆλθον. <1:39> καὶ ἦλθεν κηρύσσων εἰς τὰς συναγωγὰς αὐτῶν εἰς ὅλην τὴν Γαλιλαίαν καὶ τὰ δαιμόνια ἐκβάλλων.

NASB (1977):

^{21a}And they went into Capernaum; and immediately on the Sabbath ^bHe entered the synagogue and began to teach. ²²And ^athey were amazed at His teaching; for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. ²³And just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, ²⁴saying, ^a"What do we have to do with You, Jesus ¹of ^bNazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!" ²⁵And Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!" ²⁶And throwing him into convulsions, the unclean spirit cried out with a loud voice, and came out of him. ²⁷And they were all ^aamazed, so that they debated among themselves, saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him." ²⁸And immediately the news about Him went out everywhere into all the surrounding district of Galilee.

^{29a}And immediately ¹after they had come ^bout of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with ²James and John. ³⁰Now Simon's mother-in-law was lying sick with a fever; and immediately they spoke to Him about her. ³¹And He came to her and raised her up, taking her by the hand, and the fever left her, and she ¹waited on them. ^{32a}And ^bwhen evening had come, ^bafter the sun had set, they *began* bringing to Him all who were ill and those who were ^cdemon-possessed. ³³And the whole ^acity had gathered at the door. ³⁴And He ^ahealed many who were ill with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and He was not permitting the demons to speak, because they ¹knew who He was.

^{35a}And in the early morning, while it was still dark, He arose and went out and departed to a lonely place, and ^bwas praying there. ³⁶And Simon and his companions hunted for Him; ³⁷ and they found Him, and said to Him, "Everyone is looking for You." ³⁸And He said to them, "Let us go somewhere else to the towns nearby, in order that I may ¹preach there also; for that is what I came out for." ^{39a}And He went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, ¹preaching and casting out the demons.

NRSV:

²¹They went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. ²²They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. ²³Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, ²⁴and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." ²⁵But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" ²⁶And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. ²⁷They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He¹ commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." ²⁸At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

²⁹As soon as they¹ left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ³⁰Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. ³¹He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them. ³²That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. ³³And the whole city was gathered around the door. ³⁴And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

³⁵In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. ³⁶And Simon and his companions hunted for him. ³⁷When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." ³⁸He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." ³⁹And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

NLT:

²¹Jesus and his companions went to the town of Capernaum. When the Sabbath day came, he went into the synagogue and began to teach. ²²The people were amazed at his teaching, for he taught with real authority — quite unlike the teachers of religious law. ²³Suddenly, a man in the synagogue who was possessed by an evil¹ spirit began shouting, ²⁴"Why are you interfering with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One sent from God!" ²⁵Jesus cut him short. "Be quiet! Come out of the man," he ordered. ²⁶At that, the evil spirit screamed, threw the man into a convulsion, and then came out of him. ²⁷Amazement gripped the audience, and they began to discuss what had happened. "What sort of new teaching is this?" they asked excitedly. "It has such authority! Even evil spirits obey his orders!" ²⁸The news about Jesus spread quickly throughout the entire region of Galilee.

²⁹After Jesus left the synagogue with James and John, they went to Simon and Andrew's home. ³⁰Now Simon's mother-in-law was sick in bed with a high fever. They told Jesus about her right away. ³¹So he went to her bedside, took her by the hand, and helped her sit up. Then the fever left her, and she prepared a meal for them. ³²That evening after sunset, many sick and demon-possessed people were brought to Jesus. ³³The whole town gathered at the door to watch. ³⁴So Jesus healed many people who were sick with various diseases, and he cast out many demons. But because the demons knew who he was, he did not allow them to speak.

³⁵Before daybreak the next morning, Jesus got up and went out to an isolated place to pray. ³⁶Later Simon and the others went out to find him. ³⁷When they found him, they said, "Everyone is looking for you." ³⁸But Jesus replied, "We must go on to other towns as well, and I will preach to them, too. That is why I came." ³⁹So he traveled throughout the region of Galilee, preaching in the synagogues and casting out demons.

Greek NT

1:21
1 Καὶ
εἰσπορεύονται
εἰς Καφαρναοὺμ·
καὶ
εὐθὺς
τοῖς σάββασιν
εἰσελθὼν εἰς τὴν συναγωγὴν
2 ἐδίδασκεν.

1:22
3 καὶ
ἐξεπλήρουντο
ἐπὶ τῇ διδαχῇ αὐτοῦ·
γάρ
4 ἦν διδάσκων αὐτοὺς
ὡς ἐξουσίαν ἔχων
καὶ
οὐχ ὡς οἱ γραμματεῖς.

1:23
5 καὶ
εὐθὺς
ἦν... ἄνθρωπος
ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ αὐτῶν
ἐν πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ
καὶ

6 ἀνέκραξεν
1:24 λέγων,

α Τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί,
Ἰησοῦ Ναζαρηνέ;

β ἤλθες ἀπολέσαι ἡμᾶς;

γ οἶδά σε τίς εἶ,
ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ.

1:25
7 καὶ
ἐπετίμησεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς
λέγων,

δ Φιμώθητι
καὶ
ε ἐξελθε ἐξ αὐτοῦ.

1:26
8 καὶ
σπαράξαν αὐτὸν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἀκάθαρτον
καὶ
φωνῆσαν φωνῇ μεγάλη
9 ἐξῆλθεν
ἐξ αὐτοῦ.

1:27
10 καὶ
ἐθαμβήθησαν ἅπαντες
ὥστε συζητεῖν
πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς
λέγοντας,

Τί ἐστὶν τοῦτο;
διδαχὴ καινὴ κατ' ἐξουσίαν·

11 καὶ
τοῖς πνεύμασι τοῖς ἀκαθάρτοις ἐπιτάσσει,
καὶ
ὑπακούουσιν αὐτῷ.

1:28
11 καὶ
ἐξῆλθεν ἡ ἀκοὴ αὐτοῦ
εὐθύς
πανταχοῦ
εἰς ὅλην τὴν περίχωρον τῆς Γαλιλαίας.

1:29
12 Καὶ
εὐθύς
ἐκ τῆς συναγωγῆς
ἐξελθόντες
ἦλθον
εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν
Σίμωνος
καὶ
Ἀνδρέου
μετὰ Ἰακώβου καὶ Ἰωάννου.

1:30
13 δὲ
ἡ πενθερὰ Σίμωνος κατέκειτο
πυρέσσουσα,
καὶ
εὐθύς
14 λέγουσιν αὐτῷ περὶ αὐτῆς.

1:31
15 καὶ
προσελθὼν
ἤγειρεν αὐτὴν
κρατήσας τῆς χειρὸς·
καὶ
16 ἀφῆκεν αὐτὴν ὁ πυρετός,
καὶ
17 διηκόνει αὐτοῖς.

1:32
18 δὲ
ὄψιας γενομένης,
ὅτε ἔδυν ὁ ἥλιος,
ἔφερον . . . πάντας τοὺς κακῶς ἔχοντας
πρὸς αὐτὸν καὶ
τοὺς δαιμονιζομένους·

1:33 καὶ
19 ἦν ὅλη ἡ πόλις ἐπισυνηγμένη
πρὸς τὴν θύραν.

1:34 καὶ
20 ἐθεράπευσεν πολλοὺς κακῶς ἔχοντας
ποικίλαις νόσοις

καὶ
21 δαιμόνια πολλὰ ἐξέβαλεν
καὶ
22 οὐκ ἤφιεν λαλεῖν τὰ δαιμόνια,
ὅτι ἤδειςαν αὐτόν.

1:35 Καὶ
23 πρωτὶ ἔννυχα λίαν ἀναστὰς
ἐξῆλθεν
καὶ
24 ἀπῆλθεν
εἰς ἔρημον τόπον
κάκεϊ
25 προσήχεται.

1:36 καὶ
26 κατεδίωξεν αὐτὸν Σίμων
καὶ
οἱ μετ' αὐτοῦ,

1:37 καὶ
27 εὔρον αὐτόν
καὶ
28 λέγουσιν αὐτῷ
ὅτι Πάντες ζητοῦσίν σε.

1:38 καὶ
29 λέγει αὐτοῖς,
Ἄγωμεν ἀλλαχοῦ
εἰς τὰς ἐχομένας κωμοπόλεις,
ἵνα καὶ ἐκεῖ κηρύξω·
γὰρ
εἰς τοῦτο ἐξῆλθον.

1:39 καὶ
30 ἦλθεν κηρύσσων
εἰς τὰς συναγωγὰς αὐτῶν
εἰς ὅλην τὴν Γαλιλαίαν
καὶ
τὰ δαιμόνια ἐκβάλλον.