



Making an impression

Mark 1.21-28

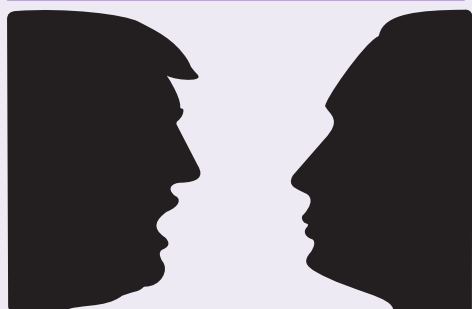
This scene is on the sabbath – the day of rest – and Jesus is in his home synagogue teaching the congregation. Jesus orders ‘an unclean spirit’ to be silent and come out of a man, and it leaves him with one last cry of defeat. Everyone is amazed at the authority of Jesus, whose words are realised in actions.

Now read **Mark 1.21-28** see p.2 for text.

A note on the passage

Jesus astonished people by the authority of his teaching. Mark does not tell us what Jesus taught, but it is clear that it had a great impact on those who heard him. As did his healing of a man with an ‘unclean spirit’. This was something new and convincing. By his teaching and his actions, he revealed that he was – and is – the ‘Holy One of God’.

HEADLINES



Check the news headlines and look for any figures of authority and bring them before God. Or use this image to help you think about particular figures of authority, past or present. Are there examples of authority being used well? Are there times when authority is misused?

You could say this prayer:

All authority in heaven and on earth belongs to you, God.

Bless and guide those in authority in our world. **Amen.**

MAKE AN IMPRESSION

Notice the impressions you form of different people you meet this week. Think about what it is that makes a particular impression on you, i.e. is it how somebody looks? What they wear? How they speak? Certain movements they make? Consider the impression you may have on others. Think about how you come across and what opinions people may form of you. Reflect about whether there are any changes you want to make about what you do or say, in order to make a good impression.

Coin rubbing

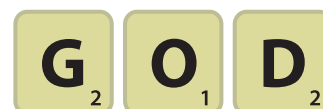
You will need: a large coin (e.g. a 2p or a 50p), a piece of paper, a crayon or pencil.

- Coins often carry an image of a person in authority.
- Take a coin and make an impression of it by placing it under a piece of paper and rubbing it gently with a crayon or pencil.
- If you had to come up with a motto that someone in authority should follow, what would it be? Write down your thoughts next to the coin rubbing.

EVENING REFLECTION

Look back over your day and think of any times you have had power or authority over someone else. How did you exercise that authority? Now think of any times someone else had authority over you. How did they exercise that authority? How did it make you feel? You might like to write down some thoughts each night.

Names for



The different names we use for God represent different aspects of God's authority. Find some quiet time to reflect on which name for God (one of these or one of your own) resonates with you most and think about why.

Creator; Father; Good shepherd; Lamb; Holy One; Almighty; Mother; Abba; Alpha and Omega; Lord.

This Tuesday (2 February) is when many Christians celebrate Candlemas – a feast to remember when Jesus was presented in the Temple and when Simeon, an old man there, recognised Jesus' authority, even as a baby. Simeon greeted Jesus as the light for the world. You may wish to light a candle and spend some time thinking about Jesus as light, and how that image makes you feel.

Choose a version of the passage to read. The first is the ROOTS version for children, the second is the NRSV text which may be suitable for older children, young people and adults.

Jesus and his followers went to Capernaum.

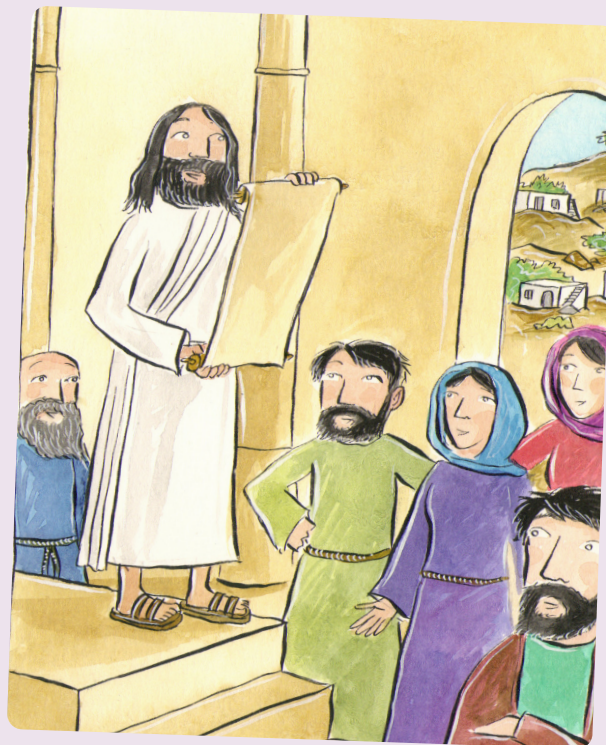
When the sabbath came, Jesus went straight to the synagogue and started teaching. People were astonished by the way he spoke. Unlike the scribes, he taught them with authority. They listened carefully and wanted to hear more.

Suddenly a man in the synagogue, filled with an unclean spirit, shouted out angrily, 'What do you want of us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are. You are the Holy One of God!'

The crowd was shocked. But Jesus didn't hesitate. Straight away he turned to the man. 'Be quiet and get out of him!' he commanded. The man fell to the floor, shaking and sobbing. Then a huge cry came out of him, and the unclean spirit was gone.

Everybody was amazed! They turned to each other excitedly and said, 'What is this? He teaches us in a new way, with authority. He even has power over unclean spirits.' And from that moment on, Jesus' fame spread across Galilee.

Mark 1.21-28



Did you know?

- A man with 'an unclean spirit' might be interpreted as someone who is disturbed, distressed or suffering from mental illness.

Mark 1.21-28 (NRSV)

They went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and 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." But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!"

And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. They 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." At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.