



# THE Teachers' Preparation Leaflet

LESSON 3.

OCTOBER 21st, 1894.

4th QUARTER.

A Sabbath in Capernaum. Mark 1: 21-34.

GOLDEN TEXT: "He taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes." Mark 1: 22.

COMMIT TO MEMORY verses 27, 28. CHILDREN'S HYMNAL 23, 38, 32, 85.

PROVE THAT—Jesus was always doing good. Acts 10: 38.

SHORTER CATECHISM—Quest. 98. What is prayer?

## DAILY PORTIONS.

(The Selections of the International Bible Reading Association.)

| MONDAY.       | TUESDAY.      | WEDNESDAY.      | THURSDAY.     | FRIDAY.        | SATURDAY.      | SABBATH.      |
|---------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Mark 1: 21-34 | Mark 1: 35-45 | Matt. 15: 21-31 | John 7: 40-53 | Matt. 7: 24-29 | Acts 16: 14-18 | John 8: 25-32 |

## NOTES AND EXPLANATIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—The events of our lesson follow immediately after the call of the four fishermen. Jesus had now taken up his residence at Capernaum, or at least made it his headquarters. The city has long since disappeared, and its very site is uncertain. Ruins encumber the shores of that sacred lake, for, like Chorazin and Bethsaida, Capernaum knew not the time of its gracious visitation. (Matt. 11: 23). It lay on the northwestern shore of the sea of Galilee, and was the centre of the most populous district of Palestine. Here was a custom house (Mark 9: 9; Luke 5: 27), and a military station with its detachment of Roman soldiers (Mark 8: 5, 9; Luke 7: 1, 8). There seems to have been but one synagogue, the gift of a devout centurion (Luke 9: 5).

LESSON PLAN. I. In the Synagogue. vs. 21-28. II. In the Home vs. 29-31. III. Among the Afflicted.

I. IN THE SYNAGOGUE. 21. **Capernaum**—Capernaum lies on the northwest side of Lake Gennesaret, and is sunk a thousand feet below the elevated plain which surrounds it. From the western hills adjacent the traveller sees far below him a blue sheet of water, some thirteen miles long, and, in the broadest part, six or seven miles wide; its deep depression is a volcanic basin, giving it something of that strange, unnatural character which belongs in a greater degree to the Dead Sea. The eastern highlands slope abruptly to the water's edge, forming a lofty wall, extending the entire length of the lake. Midway on the west the range of hills trends first westward and then to the northeast, growing constantly more rounded and beautiful, till, as a gentle elevation, it again touches the lake. In the recess formed by these encircling hills, lies the plain or vale of Gennesaret. It has been described by all who have seen it as a natural paradise. Well watered by perennial fountains and rivulets, with a soil of unsurpassed fertility, and a climate that favors the production of tropical fruits as well as those of the temperate zone, it is even now famous for its fruitfulness and beauty. In the time of Christ it was thickly studded with flourishing villages, embowered in palm groves, vineyards and olive orchards." (Dr. Eddy.) The site of Capernaum is disputed. Two localities contend for the honor. *Tell Hum*, about two miles southwest of the entrance of the Jordan into the lake, and *Khan Minyeh*, some two or three miles further to the southwest. At *Tell Hum* there are the ruins of a synagogue which some have supposed might have been that built by the pious centurion (Luke 7: 1-10). In a very literal sense, Capernaum has "gone down into Hades." (Matt. 11: 23.) See the parallel narrative in Luke 4: 31-37. **Straightway**—one of Luke's "catch-

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words." The same word is, for the sake of variety, translated "immediately" and "forthwith." Notice how often it occurs in this lesson. Here it means that on the very next Sabbath after his arrival in the town he went into the synagogue. This was his custom. (Luke 4: 16.) **The Synagogue**—Jesus paid great respect to the synagogue service. In connection with it he wrought many of his most notable miracles, and from its pulpit uttered most of his teachings. The service consisted in reading assigned portions of Scripture, reciting long prayers, and listening to the "dry-as-dust" commentaries of the rabbis. Sometimes discussion enlivened the proceedings, and arguments were even carried to a violent conclusion. There was no singing, unless the monotonous recitation of the psalms and prayers may be classed as praise. A brighter service befits the Christian Church, the keynote of whose worship was given by the angels on the plains of Bethlehem. Notice, Jesus never staid away from church because the singing was poor or the sermon dull. **Taught**—The fact that church members are not what they ought to be, and church affairs are not conducted according to our notion, is no reason why we should refuse to take up work for Christ in connection with any department that may offer itself. The more reason why we should follow Jesus' example and try to show others a more excellent way.

**22. Astonished**—See the same effect produced by the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 7: 28, 29). **One that had authority**—He claimed to be sufficient authority for what he uttered, and did not quote learned rabbis as justifying his statements. He assumed the right of explaining, modifying or repealing the laws of Moses, and of instituting virtually new commandments of his own. The highest sanction which he attaches to his words is "Verily, verily I say unto you." He dealt with the weightiest matters of the law, and his words awoke the slumbering consciences of the people. What he said was so plainly true that it was recognized as "the word of God." (Luke 5: 1). **The Scribes**—called "lawyers" (Matt. 22: 35), and "doctors" (Luke 5: 17). They transcribed copies of the Scriptures, and made them their special study. They observed and handed down the "traditions of the elders."

**23. In their synagogue**—implying that there was but one in the place. **A man with an unclean spirit**—"a man in the power of an unclean spirit;" lit. "in an unclean spirit," under its influence, controlled by it, as we say "in drink" or "in love." This was not an insane man, nor a specially bad man, but one over whom satan had obtained mysterious power. Probably he was like others most of the time, except when the "fit" came on him. It is not possible within the space here allowable to discuss the vexed question of demoniacal possession. The following points, however, will cover the ground: (1) Our Lord himself refers the possession to

satanic agency (Luke 10: 17-19; 11: 14-22). (2) He does not infer that the victim is morally responsible for his condition. One at least was so "of a child" (Mark 9: 21). (3) The satanic influence was upon the body and rational nature, not upon the soul, or essential moral being. The patient was under a "clairvoyant" influence. With the wonders of hypnotism and mesmerism before us, we cannot pronounce such an influence of an evil spirit over the man as incredible. (4) "Possession" was commonly accompanied by bodily infirmity, such as dumbness, deafness, blindness, epilepsy, insanity, etc. (Matt. 9: 32; 12: 22; Mark 9: 17-27; 5: 1-5). (5) If it is said that medical men of the time called some forms of insanity "possession," and Jesus conformed to the prevailing opinion, we must add that he went much farther than silent acquiescence in an erroneous belief. He could not have given clearer positive testimony that he shared the opinion referred to. We cannot maintain our Saviour's truthfulness and infallible knowledge without conceding that there were cases of actual subjection of the human body and will to demoniacal control. Superintendents of asylums for the insane are not by any means prepared to say that there are no similar cases at the present day. All evil spirits were "unclean" in a moral sense. They seem to have produced a corresponding outward degradation on their victims. **He cried out**—i. e. against Christ. Expostulated loudly. The demon used the vocal organs of the man and so the man is said to have "cried out."

**24. Let us alone**—This is the translation of an interjection (*ea*) expressive of surprise and displeasure. "Like a criminal when he feels the hand of the officer of justice on his arm, implying a certain fearful looking for of judgment." (Lindsay.) It is omitted in the R. V., since it is believed to have been a "reminiscence" of the transcriber from Luke 4: 34. The best manuscripts do not have it here. The demon speaks for himself and all of his kind. "Demons make a common cause with each other. (Bengel.) **What have we to do with thee**—lit. "what is there to us and thee." "This seems to mean 'Have we injured thee?' (Compare 1 Kings 17: 18.) By this the spirit meant to say that if Jesus cast him out, he would use an improper interference. But this was untrue. The possession of the man was a direct assault on God and his works. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil, and he had a right, therefore, to liberate the captive, and to punish him who had possessed him. All that Satan wants still is to be let alone." (Barnes.) Jesus used this same form of expression to his mother, but with a very different shade of meaning. (John 2: 4). **To destroy us**—It had a presentiment of coming doom. (Matt. 8: 29.) The final destruction of Satan's power is the end of Christ's mission. The demons are destroyed as injurers of mankind, when they are sent back to the place "prepared"

for them. (Matt. 25 : 41.) I know thee—Heaven and hell recognized the Christ of God, but man refused to welcome him. Alford notices that the term "Jesus the Nazarene" often occurs in strong contrast to his majesty and glory, as here and in ch. 16 : 6 ; Acts 2 : 22-24 ; 22 : 8 ; also even John 19 : 19, **The holy one of God**—It is the characteristic credulity of scepticism to consider this explicit testimony as the empty ravings of a maniac. The demon spoke the truth, compelled thereto by the dread Presence in which he found himself. (Jas. 2 : 19). See Ps. 16 : 10 ; Acts 2 : 31. Compare Luke 4 : 34 ; Rev. 3 : 7. In a lower sense priests and prophets were "holy," but Jesus was "the holy One" (Luke 1 : 35) of whom they were types and heralds. The shuddering demon uses this designation, because it indicated that in Jesus which was most contrary to its own nature, and made its destruction a matter of hopeless certainty.

**25. Hold thy peace**—The Greek verb comes from the word for a muzzle, lit. "be muzzled." A stern command, degrading and contemptuous. It is a word for a beast, and would never be addressed to a man. It is true that Jesus did not accept the testimony of demons regarding himself, but this the voice of the victor, "Be silent and go." (Meyer.)

**26. Tearing him**—(R. V.) marg. "convulsing him." He threw him down in convulsions, but did not dare to injure him (Luke 4 : 35). **Crying with a loud voice** (R. V.)—a yell of mingled rebellion, rage, despair and fear. How it must have curdled the blood of those who heard it! See also ch. 9 : 20, 26 ; Luke 9 : 42. Satan will struggle hard before he lets a sinner go. We cannot expect a painless cure for sinful habits.

**27. New doctrine**—(R. V.) "a new teaching!" Such authority they had never heard of before, and the explanation of it must involve new truths. Had they been as wise as the demon they would not have been so much astonished. It was not wonderful that the Saviour of men should cast out "unclean," *i. e.* "unholy" spirits, but they were not willing to believe him to be the Messiah.

II. IN THE HOME. (Matt. 8 : 14, 15 ; Luke 4 : 37-39). **28. The region of Galilee round about** (R. V.)—His fame also spread to Syria (Matt. 4 : 23-25).

**29. Simon and Andrew**—They came from Bethsaida (John 1 : 44), but now resided at Capernaum.

**30. Simon's wife's mother**—It is inconsistent in the Pope of Rome to claim to be the successor of Peter, and at the same time enforce celibacy of the clergy. (1 Cor. 9 : 5.) **Sick of a fever**—Luke, who was a physician (Col. 4 : 14) calls it by a technical term, "a great fever," probably *typhus*, as distinguished from a low, intermittent fever. The low, marshy shore of the lake was very unhealthy.

**Anon**—(on, or in, *one* moment, Luke's favorite word ; translated also "forthwith," "straightway," "immediately," etc.) **They tell him**—Luke says "they besought him for her," "Wherever Jesus comes, He comes to do good, and will richly pay for his entertainment. (M. Henry.)

**31. Took her by the hand**—Luke says he "rebuked the fever." He spoke as a master to a servant. Compare Matt. 8 : 5-9. Note the loving, helping hand of Jesus. Sympathy, compassion and power were in its touch. She would feel encouraged to try and rise when his hand clasped hers. (Ps. 103 : 3.) **She ministered**—"She rises as if no disease had ever weakened her, with glad and grateful spirit to wait upon Jesus and the rest. And so within that hour kindly hands were provided, like those of Martha at Bethany, to minister to the Saviour's wants during the busiest, most toilsome period of his life ; when, in season and out of season, early in the morning and far on often in the night, he came and went ; living longer under that roof of Peter's house at Capernaum than under any other that sheltered him after his public ministry had begun." (Hanna.)

III. AMONG THE AFFLICTED. **32. When the sun did set**—The Sabbath was over at sunset. Besides, the cool of the day was the best time to bring out the weak and sick.

**33. All the city**—A general way of speaking. It means a great crowd composed of the friends of the sick and others who came out of curiosity.

**34. He healed many**—*i. e.* he healed all that came to him (Matt. 8 : 16). "He laid his hands on every one of them" (Luke 4 : 40). **Because they knew him**—Luke says that they "knew that he was the Christ" (Luke 4 : 41). The time for the full disclosure of that truth was not yet come, besides he did not wish testimony from such a quarter. "From such a source it was likely to injure the estimation of him in whose behalf it was borne ; for the truth itself might come into discredit when the 'Father of lies' bore witness to it." (Kitto.) "Hushing by his own voice the delirium of madness, and touching disease into health again by laying on each unhappy and tortured sufferer his pure and gentle hands, moved, in his love and tenderness, the young prophet of Nazareth, the Christ, the Saviour of the world." (Farrar.) "In all the afflictions that met his eye, he was afflicted. And when, from the day of his baptism to the night at Gethsemane, he was going from village to village thronged by moaning sufferers and by parents stricken through their children, he comprehended perfectly, as no man ever did, the suffering of each ; adopted and realized in his own self each quivering agony : took their infirmities, and bare their sicknesses." Even on the way to Calvary, and upon the cross, "bearing our griefs and carrying our sorrows" to the last." (Hopkins.)

# SUMMARY AND REVIEW.

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There are two ways by which men may be taught, first by example, second by precept. Each of these methods is good in itself, and is powerful in influencing the heart and mind; but used together their individual power is greatly increased. In nothing is the force of this argument so plainly seen as in the case of the Christian.

What the world has asked to see in all ages, and what it asks to see with even greater force today, is a genuine Christianity—a practice that will justify the profession made. This is to be seen nowhere as in the life of the "Practical Christian," whose actions were always a confirmation of his words.

In this lesson both of these methods are exemplified. First, *Teaching by precept*. In the 22nd verse it is stated that "They were astonished at His doctrine (or teaching): for He taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes." That they were astonished at His teaching, and perceived that He spoke with authority, is no wonder, if we compare his teaching to that of the scribes, whose practice it was to retail the old traditions of the rabbis to their hearers. Jesus spoke as one who knew of what he was speaking. It was only He, who created man, who knew the way to heaven, and who was very God Himself, that was able to speak with such authority as Jesus spoke. This very fact is what makes the religion of Jesus Christ to differ from all other religions. Second, *Teaching by example*. Christ confirms His teaching by example. If one desires to influence others, he must be consistent with what he professes. If teachers desire to influence their scholars, or scholars their companions, they must show by their lives that they believe what they profess. Faith without works is dead, and so is profession without practice.

## BLACKBOARD ILLUSTRATION.

Christ Teaching      B Y      Precept Example

"He taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes."

## Ten Minutes Normal Drill

Based on the text-book, "The Sabbath School Teacher's Handbook; or, the Principles and Practice of Teaching, with special reference to the Sabbath School," and prepared by Principal Kirkland of the Toronto Normal School.

### THE ART OF TEACHING. — *Continued.*

*Methods of Teaching must conform to the three following Principles:*

- (1) To the special characteristics of the knowledge we are communicating.
- (2) To the laws of mental growth at different periods of life.
- (3) To the particular purpose of the instruction.

*Advantages of a good Method:*

- (1) The teacher, starting with a fixed purpose, runs less risk of losing sight of it, and missing his way.
- (2) Having carefully reflected on the means at his command, he is more likely to choose the best.
- (3) Since he is sure of the end in view and of the means of attaining it, it depends only on himself to reach it as soon as possible.