

to their schools and everywhere they went, they couldn't stop talking about Him. We've lost a bit of the awe and wonder of Jesus in our work-a-day worlds where we run from one activity to the next, squeezing in a quick meal, head to a child or grandchild's sporting event, catch that "thing" at church, and then off to the next. I've touched on this a couple different days this week but I've got to come back to it again today. Even if we're fast-paced, open your eyes and see what the Lord is putting before you. Whether that's in your vocation or in your leisure, whether it's with family or friends, whether it's in the wonder of creation or the creation of cool things by the hands and craftsmanship of people. Jesus is here. He is here with you, loving you, helping you, guiding you. When we fall, He's here to pick us up, to forgive us, to wipe our tears away. He's here to bring healing and hope. Don't ever stop looking and watching and wondering and being amazed at this God who has called us His own children, who came and lived and died and rose again to give you life! Take that message home in your heart and then let it shine into the lives of others because there are people all around you who don't see Him, who don't know Him, who are hurting and wondering where to go. Tell the stories, share the wonder of what you see, of the Story that Jesus is telling in you and through your life.

Saturday — Indescribable

Throughout the week I've encouraged you to be amazed at what God is doing and who God is. To wrap up our week, I invite you to reflect on a contemporary Christian song called *Indescribable* and if you have the ability, check out the beautiful visuals with this song on the following YouTube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8FlchSJoOA>. To help you if you don't have the ability to listen to it, here are the words as you are amazed by this God whom we serve and worship! 1) "From the highest of heights to the depths of the sea creation's revealing Your majesty. From the colors of fall to the fragrance of spring every creature unique in the song that it sings, all exclaiming: (Refrain) Indescribable, uncontainable, You placed the stars in the sky and You know them by name. You are amazing God. All powerful, untameable, awestruck we fall to our knees as we humbly proclaim You are amazing God. 2) Who has told every lightning bolt where it should go or seen heavenly storehouses laden with snow? Who imagined the sun and gives source to its light yet conceals it to bring us the coolness of night? None can fathom! (Refrain)"

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This week's *Bring it Home* devotions were written by Pastor Glen Schlecht
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*Devotions for
the week of
January 28, 2018*

What Now?

1. Share with someone this week some of the ways Jesus makes a difference in your life.
2. Intentionally look for ways you can see Him all around you this week.
3. Be amazed at this God who loves you and calls you His own.

*If you would like to receive daily *Bring It Home* devotions by email, please contact the church office: churchoffice@immanuelloveland.org*

Monday — A Teaching that Shines!

When we think about a master teacher and preacher, I would have to say that Jesus did it best! He knew how to bring the truth of His own Word to light, to make relevant connections with the people to whom He was speaking. He knew how to engage them in what He was sharing. No surprise there, right? But how did He do it? That's what I want to look at throughout this week in these *Bring It Home* devotions. With that question in mind, how Jesus took His message to the people, start this week by reading the entire account in the Gospel reading that we focused on Sunday, this short reading from Mark 1. As you read, reflect on how Jesus took His message to the people and why it had the impact it had on those who witnessed and heard what went on. How does this same message have an impact on you? How could it have an impact on others? And finally, how does this help you to live out this powerful message of Jesus and how does it help you to take this powerful message to others today? Read Mark 1:21-28 and reflect on those questions. If you're so inclined, I'd love to hear some of your ponderings and thoughts! Email me at gschlecht@immanuelloveland.org.

Tuesday — Authority

Read Mark 1:21, 27. Mark records for us that the people were amazed. What was it that amazed them from these two verses? Jesus taught and spoke with authority! And that was contrasted by what the people were used to, the teaching they received from the teachers of the law. What was so different about Jesus from the other teachers? What we know is that the scribes or teachers of the law would often quote other teachers and well-known rabbis to back their statements and what it was they were teaching. So they were merely building on what others had said. Jesus didn't do that. He simply spoke. And taught. And cast out demons with a simple command. Apparently Jesus didn't need the support or backing of other teachers. And we know why, don't we?! He was The Author of the books, The Inspiration behind all the writings of Scripture, The Ultimate Authority Himself. And it is with that confidence that we can read and meditate on Scripture – knowing it is Jesus Himself speaking to us through His own living Word. And that Word carries His very authority. So when we read a command, we should take it to heart. When we read a story, we should wonder what Jesus is trying to tell me. When we hear a promise, we know we can trust Him. What a gift – to have His teaching, the authoritative teaching of Jesus in our very own hands!

Wednesday — Amazement

As you read the Scripture text for today, focus on the amazement of the people. Read Mark 1:21-28. As we looked at yesterday, that amazement gets taken directly back to Jesus teaching with authority and then the authority that He exercised when He cast that demon out of the man. When was the last time you were amazed at something the Lord did? Seriously, think about that for a moment – when was the last time? It's sobering and a bit embarrassing for me as I try to answer that question. There have been various times, from something I learned and gleaned out of studying and preaching His Word, there have been some worship services where I have walked away amazed at what I witnessed Jesus

doing, there have been some miraculous medical miracles that have amazed me, and some ways I've seen the Lord working in my family have been pretty amazing. But shouldn't we be constantly amazed?! Something that is regularly encouraged with various teams here at Immanuel is to share how you've seen God at work in your life. Sometimes I believe that we forget to watch for God working. And so the more we can encourage each other to be watching for Him, to share stories of what we see Him doing, the more we are going to be amazed! So for the remainder of this week, I challenge you to watch closely for what you see God doing – and to be amazed by Him again and again. He loves you, my friend, and He's right here by your side, day in and day out, ready to show you the power of His love in and through you. As you watch for Him, try to tell someone each day what you see Him doing. If you would, include me in on the stories because I'd love to hear what He's doing to amaze you in big and in small ways!

Thursday — Healing

Read Mark 1:23-26. It's interesting in this particular story that the man in the synagogue who approached Jesus and cried out to Him wasn't looking for healing. In fact, it was the demon who was driving the man and it seems that the demon cried out at Jesus because of the authoritative teaching that Jesus was doing at the time. What was the demon's question and concern? It was a self-preservation question – "Have you come to destroy us?" And it's interesting that the demon knows the answer to that question because of what immediately followed. He knows who Jesus is – "the Holy One of God!" And the demons know what the mission of the Holy One of God is: to proclaim the coming Kingdom, a Kingdom of love, of life, of healing and forgiveness, a Kingdom where evil is stamped out and eliminated. So Jesus would have none of the demon's chattering on and immediately commanded him to be quiet and to come out of the man. And the man was healed. Who knows what that man must have experienced? How long had he been possessed by this demon? How long had he not been himself, being driven by the impulses and urges of this demon within him? But now he was free. He was himself once again. There must have been tremendous peace that came to the man. From this, we can also know that Jesus came to cast out the demons, cast out evil, and turn our hearts, our minds, our lives back to Him as He came to reclaim us from the realm of the demonic. That healing is real and it is healing that can still come today in many different ways. We seek that healing through Christ's forgiveness and love, through the freedom we experience when we know and are reminded of the One to whom we belong. That healing will come as we seek it through prayer, through counsel, through His Word and Sacraments, and through various means He provides for us still today. Rest in the comfort and assurance of the power of Jesus.

Friday — A Message that Shines and Shines and Shines

Read Mark 1:27-28. While Jesus silenced the demons in this story, He couldn't silence the people who were amazed at what they witnessed Jesus doing. They took that message of wonder and amazement over Jesus far beyond that moment – back to their homes and to their workplaces and