

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VILLA RICA, PCA

Jesus The Exorcist

By

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Mark 1:21-28

Mark records for us that the next thing Jesus did after calling Andrew and Peter, James and John was to go to a synagogue on the Sabbath day in Capernaum and begin to teach the Word of God. This is the most important thing for you and me. To be taught by God. To learn the Words of God and what they mean for us. The scribes did that too. But there was a difference. The scribes simply read and give an explanation of the sacred writings, but Jesus taught them with authority. The Word of God took on power in his mouth.

We might compare this to a clerk in a law library informing someone what the law says and a judge who is sitting on the bench rendering a judgment in a case. The law clerk is merely reciting what the law says, but the judge is applying the law in a particular case. When Jesus spoke it was as a Judge applying the Word of God with authority to the hearts of all the people listening. As He spoke the Word came home with authority to their hearts.

Jesus cannot act out of character. He is God and He speaks as God speaks. When God speaks it is with authority. His Word is with power.

In the book of Revelation Chapter 9 we are told that vast hordes of demonic creatures are loosed upon the earth. When the fifth angel sounds his trumpet a fallen star or angel is given the key to the bottomless pit, the abyss. And when he opened the abyss, smoke came out like smoke from a furnace, so much that the smoke darkens the sun and the sky. And out of that smoke came locusts that had the power of scorpions to hurt men. They don't have the power to kill, just to hurt and torture men. The loosing of these demonic creatures is called a woe. There are three woes predicted and the loosed demons are cause the first and second of these three woes. (Rev. 9:1-10.

Following on the heels of that fifth angel sounding his trumpet is the sixth angel. And when he blows his trumpet four bound angels are loosed at the great river Euphrates in the Middle East. The loosing of those four bound angels sets in motion forces that are said to kill a third of mankind. Again, in this plague of evil it is inspired and propelled by demonic forces.

The powers of Satan are chained and held back from the full force and fury of which he and his hordes of demons are capable by God's secret purpose and will.

We are not told exactly why God both binds and looses these tremendous forces upon the earth. We could say that God looses these forces as a preliminary judgment

upon men because of their wickedness, but the scripture tells us that these woe do not succeed in causing men to repent. In Revelation 9:20 we read ²⁰**And the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk; ²¹and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts. Rev. 9:20-21**

I am convinced that we live in the days of the loosing of the demonic hordes. We are seeing that smoke arise out of the Middle East.

Demons are dangerous, even singly. Fortunately for us, most of the demonic forces are kept under restraint. They cannot assemble in great locust-like battalions unless God permits it. But we do find cases of individuals being joined by demons in this life. Apparently God permits this to happen now as in the days of Christ, for we have reports of missionaries and others even in the United States.

There was the case a few years ago in Colorado of a 13-year girl named Kathryn Torgler who killed her 8-year-old sister. Dr. Rex Williams, a psychiatrist testified she suffered from a mental disorder and believed her soul was possessed by demons. He recommended exorcism to help her and her attorneys recommended that this be done and the judge agreed to consider the recommendation.

In the episode in Mark 1 the demon-possessed man was in the Capernaum synagogue where Jesus was teaching. We usually think that demon possessed persons are in places where there is little or no truth of the Bible. But Satan is bold to send his agents right into the church. This man must have belonged to the synagogue. He may have been a member of that synagogue all his life. When the Lord Jesus came in and began to teach this demon could not stay quiet. **He cried out, ²⁴saying, "What business do we have with each other, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!"**

The demon asks to be let alone. Isn't this the cry of the sinner? Let me be. Just don't bother me. I'm okay. The demon finds a willing vessel and takes up residence. Once he gets established he begins to mould that person to his own evil character. The person is not aware that he is taken over because the demon works so gradually and slowly. It doesn't transform him overnight into a demonic person. He just begins to grow more unbelieving and unclean. His resistance toward evil is weakened. He is like the person who lives with another person. Over a period of time the two personalities begin to acquire similarities. Some people even begin to look alike.

Notice that the man speaks to Jesus as though there were two persons involved -- Let us alone; what have we to do with thee? The Voice speaks for both man and demon. All that the demon expects is destruction. There is no faith in God's mercy. And the possessed man has the same attitude and unbelief. God can do me no good, reasons the demon, for he is holy and I am unholy and unclean.

The demon knew Jesus from a prior period. Men do not know Christ from a previous experience of fellowship, but demons do. The fallen angels once enjoyed the joys and felicities of heaven. This demon recognized Jesus as the Son of God and Holy One of God. Notice that before he had said us and we but now he says I know you, who you are. Now he speaks only for himself. But his knowing only produces fear. He expects nothing but judgment from the Lord Jesus. .

Let's get something clear in our minds. The demon had a prior knowledge of Jesus. The man may never have seen Jesus before in his life, but the demon spirit had known him. When would that have been? That would have been in eternity, in heaven.

God has created all spirits of both angels and men. Jesus is that Creator. We read of Jesus Christ that He is the first-born of all creation. ¹⁵**And He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. Col. 1:15-16**

So the demon knew him. He knew him as his Creator and Lord. He knew that he had disobeyed God and had fallen from his heavenly position. So his natural reaction was, **"What business do we have with each other, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are — the Holy One of God!"**

The demon speaks for both himself and the man. They had become of like mind in many ways. The man shared the anti-Christ attitude of the demon. The demon had so influenced this man to be impure in his thoughts and unclean in his life that they were truly one in spirit. Of course, the man had so lost control of his life to the demon that the demon can speak in the first person. He first speaks in the plural, what do we have to do with you? Have you come to destroy us? In other words, we are of a sinful disposition and realm. We are not holy and pure as you are. We have nothing in common with you. You must be come here to destroy us. Is that why you are here?

Two things are implied by the demon: First, we are not like you. You are holy, we are unholy. You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, so how can you have anything to do with either of us, this man or me.

And then, secondly, **have You come to destroy us?** The demon knew that Jesus had power both to create and to destroy. A word from Jesus and it would all be over. Demons may be unclean and impure but they are not dumb. They know what foolish sinners seem not to know, that the Lord Jesus Christ is God and Lord that He can kill and cast into hell. Jude speaks of unbelieving, blasphemous men this way: ¹⁰**But these men revile the things which they do not understand; and the things which they know by instinct, like unreasoning animals, by these things they are destroyed. Jude 1:10**

The demons are wiser than most sinners, who take the name of the Lord in vain, who mock and make fun of the Word of God and the One who spoke those Words for our good. Perhaps that is explained in the final words of the demon when he speaks in the first person, **I know who You are—the Holy One of God!**"

Jesus did not accept or want the testimony of demons. He knew that men would not be helped but rather hindered by the testimony of demons. So he told the man, **"Be quiet, and come out of him!"**

We can learn from this that the demons believe and tremble. They do not believe in order to repent and change. They believe because they know who Jesus is and recognize that there is no way for them to co-exist with Him. Just as the night must depart when the light appears, so the demons must be banished when Christ appears.

God's mercy is displayed in this instance. Jesus exorcised the demon. The man had not asked for deliverance from the demon. Jesus simply commands the demon to come out of the man and he had to come out.

What prompted Jesus to deliver this man from his condition? Was there something in the man that appealed to Jesus? We have nothing to go on to say that this was the case. The man was under the influence and power of a demon. He spoke like a demon. He thought like a demon. He behaved like a demon. The demon had so taken over his personality that for all practical purposes he was demonic. Yet Jesus commanded the demon to depart out of him. And it was not without a struggle. We read in verse 26 that the demon threw the man into convulsions, and then cried with a loud voice as he came out of this man. It was a battle for the soul and this demon would not give up easily, but he could not resist the power of Christ.

Christ speaks and it is so. This man was liberated. He was set free. He was made clean. The whole congregation saw that take place. They were amazed because Jesus had such power over evil spirits. We read in verse 27... **²⁷They were all amazed, 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."**

What a wonderful thing when a man is saved and delivered from the power of Satan. We may not have had an unclean spirit as this man did but the scripture tells us that all sinners are the Devil's meat.

We read in Ephesians 2 **¹And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, ²in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. ³Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. ⁴But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; Eph. 2:1-8 (NASB)**

² Timothy 2:25 tells us to deal gently with sinners in correcting those who are in opposition, **if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, 2 Tim. 2:25**

Jesus is the Exorcist. Only Jesus can deliver a soul from the power of Satan and demonic forces. We can invoke His Name and ask Him to cast out the unclean spirit. The Word of God tells us that demon forces are powerless against the child of God who has the mark of God in his forehead. When we have been washed in the blood of Christ and have been baptized in His holy Name we are able to resist the Devil and He must flee from us.

The child of God born of the Spirit of God is forever delivered from the slavery of sin and the mastery of Satan. His Word is with power. His gospel brings deliverance. He leads captivity captive. He gives gifts unto men.

Do you have the seal of God in your forehead? Have you confessed Jesus Christ and repented of your sins? God has commanded in His Word that the demon powers may not hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree, but only the men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. (Rev. 9:4).

I invite you to come to Jesus Christ today. I offer you the saving love of Jesus Christ. Come to Him in this hour and experience his deliverance, his salvation, his blessing. Find peace and a resting place in Jesus Christ through faith in him.

Hymn #468 “My Faith Has Found a Resting Place”

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