

Casting Out Demons

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[0:00] Are we turned on? Okay, there. It is good to join you. I flew up from Florida yesterday. I even got tested for COVID in order to get on an airplane. And guess what? Negative.

! My major was history and political science, and he had that subject down. The reason I loved him teaching so much was that whatever he was teaching, he actually talked about himself piloting a B-17 in World War II over Germany.

Somehow he could make it all fit. I don't know if that's how I started flying an airplane over North Vietnam. I think John Johns did it to me when I was a college kid.

But I basically loved his teaching because he'd been there. He was a credible teacher because he had loved what it means to defend American freedom.

He loved his country, and he loved the establishment which caused it to happen. John Johns taught as one with authority. Now, we move to today's gospel account, and we hear from another man of authority, Jesus of Nazareth.

[1:37] In that synagogue back then, Jesus showed his authority and his credibility as a teacher. He lived what it means to save humankind.

So let's talk about his authority today. Does Jesus have all that much authority over evil today? And if so, where?

That's what we're going to talk about. And we'll utilize Mark 1, 21 through 28 to talk about that. If you want to follow it in your pew Bible, please do so.

We're going to look at this sermon in three points. The first is what we call thesis. The thesis is Jesus teaches with authority.

And then point two will be the antithesis, an attempt to usurp his authority. And we'll finish with point three, synthesis.

[2:35] Jesus uses a show and tell to reassert his authority. So that's where we're going today. Are you ready to go? Let's go. Okay. We start with verses 21 and 22.

And they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath he entered the synagogue and was teaching. And they were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority and not as the scribes.

Thesis. Thesis. Jesus teaches with authority. So on that day back then, Jesus and his disciples rolled into the fishing village of Capernaum.

This was also the home of his disciples, Simon Peter, and several other of the disciples. Now some of us on pilgrimages have been in Capernaum.

We've actually stood in that synagogue. We've looked down at the house of Simon Peter. It is awe-inspiring to walk in the steps of Jesus.

[3:43] But there he was, 2,000 years ago, an itinerant rabbi teaching in the synagogue. And Mark states, editorializing, he taught with authority.

Now, here we go with some Greek. All right, you ready for Greek? All right. In the New Testament Greek, we find two words dealing with authority.

There's a word called exousia, which means position authority. Could you get me a glass of water? In position authority, we look at that today.

Let's just say the President of the United States. When he speaks for the nation, he speaks with authority. He's the President. He was elected the President.

He has what's called position authority. Now, Jesus was a rabbi, so he had authority to speak in the synagogue.

[4:52] Now, when we look back at his life, we realize that it wasn't just as a rabbi that he had authority. We believe in the Christian faith that as he walked around the earth, that was God in the

flesh.

Credibility. Authority to teach. So that's one word, exousia. The second word is dunamus. This has to do with power authority.

We think of the life of Martin Luther King Jr. He was not elected to anything. He was like us. But he had such power that he could change history.

That's power authority. That's personhood authority. A word that comes from dunamus is dynamite. That's the kind of power that Jesus showed.

Thank you very much, Brian. I'm having a hard time getting used to life in Syracuse here. Wow, it's hard. Thank you. Okay.

[6:01] In this passage, Jesus shows us both his exousia, his position power, his authority, and his dynamite power authority.

Let's see how that all works together. Now, let's think of Jesus as the rabbi. He was a rabbi. He was a rabbi, but he was unique in the way he taught.

Rabbis in those days quoted scholars from the past to make their point to teach. Rabbi Gamaliel said, Rabbi Gamaliel said, You won't walk more than three miles on the Sabbath.

Okay. Now, Jesus didn't teach that way. He just spoke on his own. He spoke from his heart. His sacred heart.

So we get an example of that kind of teaching style. Jesus said at one point, You've heard it said, An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

[7:05] But I say, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. Radical teaching. He wasn't quoting any rabbi from the past. It was coming from the heart of Jesus.

So when we look at, when we listen to his teaching every Sunday in the gospel, when we read his words every day in devotions, he's got credibility.

He's got authority. He knows what he's talking about. And we have to take to heart what he teaches. Back then, the religious leaders were astonished, it says in Mark.

We're astonished at his teaching. And today we're still astonished at his teaching. We try to put it together. What does it mean to love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you?

Does that mean I have to love my neighbor who lets his dog roll all over my yard? Well, he really doesn't. He doesn't even have a dog. But let's just use that for an example.

[8:07] How do I live out the teachings of Jesus? Okay, so the teachings, the position authority. Now we move to point two.

The antithesis, verses 23 through 26. And immediately 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 out with a loud voice, came out of him.

An attempt is made to usurp the authority of Jesus, to blunt his teachings. How else than bringing in a little drama? Enter Satan.

The man with the demonic spirit was not Satan. He was just oppressed by Satan. He entered just at the right moment to divert the attention of the people from the teachings of Jesus.

[9:22] That happens today, doesn't it? Satan still shows up. Now, back then, Jesus used his power authority, dunamis, by delivering the man from that destructive spirit.

Do you know we do that every day when we say the Lord's Prayer? But deliver us from evil. That's deliverance ministry. And in the Greek, it's deliver us from the evil one.

I don't know what happened in the translation. But that's deliverance prayer. We say every day. And you know, Jesus does it. He delivers us.

He uses his dunamis authority to do it. He casts out demons. He did it back then.

He kicked that demon out of that man's life. He took authority over the evil. You know, remember in another place where he stilled the storm? He said, peace, be still.

[10:33] Be quiet. And the wind died. And in today's lesson, he looks at the man and says to the spirit, shut up. Get out of here.

Jesus, you see, had both exousia authority and dunamis authority.

And he could exercise it over nature by having the wind die down. He could exercise it over human nature by freeing them from evil.

The antithesis is defeated. And the synthesis has come. Point three. Verses 27 and 28.

And they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, What is this? A new teaching with authority. He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.

[11 : 33] And at once his fame spread everywhere throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee. It would be nice if the demons all left back then.

But they seem to show up, don't they? Demons show up when we are imprisoned to a sin way of life.

When we see domination by others of our freedom. Even when we dominate others and take away their freedom. Welcome, welcome, welcome.

Welcome. I think there may be some more showing up. Good to see you all. This kind of evil happens today right here in Syracuse.

Satan attempts to divert us from following Jesus. By trying to imprison us. To stifle us.

[12 : 37] It happens in politics, doesn't it? And we've had that up to here. It happens actually, though, in our families. In our occupations.

In our church life. And even what dances around in our head and emotions. Do strange things dance around in your head and your emotions? Yeah.

Yeah. Satan works to capture us away from Jesus. To tempt us away. Today, our emotional composition seems to be the target.

You know, Mary Ellen points out to me that I am borderline ADD. Attention Deficit Disorder. It's bothered me all my life, I'll tell you.

I still remember Dr. John Johns looking down at me and saying, Earth to Benna, what planet are you on? I've had to work hard and pray hard to be delivered of the effects of this condition.

[13 : 45] So it doesn't render me ineffective in pastoral care. Or divert me from the teachings of Jesus. You see, I have to have a mental sign in front of my head that says, Listen.

Listen. I don't do that well. When you speak your heart to me, I have to be careful that I don't depart for Venus in the middle of our conversation.

Now, I don't believe Satan gave me ADD. I think it's hereditary. But I do believe he'll use it to render me ineffective and even destructive to souls.

Sometimes when I listen, I hear things that are directly from God. I've had to deal from time to time with demonic oppression in the lives of others.

Where Satan tries to manufacture a diversion from Jesus. There's the case of the wonderful woman.

[14 : 56] She's not from here. She lives on another planet. But this woman, wonderfully rational and intelligent, completely penetrated by the infamous angel of death.

Her witness was thwarted by her depressive episodes into believing that the angel of death was carrying her to hell. She told people that.

It thwarted her mission. We had to have some heavy-duty deliverance sessions. In one, her voice actually changed from the wonderful woman she was into a horrible, unearthly screeching before she was delivered from the demonic monster and returned to the wonderful Christian she was.

Now, I don't mean to frighten you. And I don't mean to tell you that there's a demon behind every bush. But I do want to tell you that evil is real. It crouches at your door and mine.

It's the antithesis of the power and authority of Jesus. Back that day in the synagogue, he proved that he could defeat evil and bring synthesis to our lives.

[16 : 23] And so we move to the conclusion of this sermon. Does Jesus really have that much authority over evil? Yes.

He went to the cross and defeated evil for you and me. Where is that authority today?

You're looking at it. Here in God's church. Here in this room today. The diversion today from the world is a series of secular teachings which draw us away from scriptural truth.

Inclusivity, which could be a good word, is used to stretch so far that we stretch from the Bible into a world that's weird.

What's happening? How about cancel culture? Have you been following that? Last week, the San Francisco Board of Education... Now, I'm not saying anything against California.

[17 : 35] I'm not saying anything against San Francisco. But this is what their board voted last week. School names are going to be changed. There will no longer be any schools in San Francisco named after George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Jefferson, William McKinley, James Garfield, James Monroe, Herbert Hoover, Paul Revere, Francis Scott Key.

They're going to spend several million dollars tearing down signs and having contests for the names of these schools. These people have been cancelled.
Now, even our radio friend, Mike Lindell, everybody know that name? Yeah? He's the MyPillow guy. He's been cancelled by Bed, Bath, and Beyond because of his statements about Trump. Because of his outright statements that Jesus is the answer. He's cancelled. And you know, it's not just there.

How about full-blown sexual and gender boundaries being stretched beyond recognition? How about religion being put in the category of pluralism?

[19:00] All religions are alike. All going in the same direction. Clearly untrue. But it's what's taught. It's a diversion from Jesus.

You know, if you start to buy into these things, you end up in the Hotel California. You can check out anytime you like, but you can never leave. Unless you're delivered.

Jesus wants to deliver you and me from the demonic teachings which are sweeping our world, our homes, our hearts, and our emotions.

He wants to do it right now. He has both exousia power and dunamis power to do it for us.

To set us free. He wants to free the captured. And you and I are the captured. So, brothers and sisters, here it comes.

[20:05] Right now, we're going to pray. If you sense that you are spiritually oppressed or captured by a type of sin behavior or caught in a web that cripples your inner peace, I'm going to pray right now for all of us that we will be delivered from it through the power and authority of Jesus.

So, I'm going to ask if we could just bow our heads right now and I'm going to say a prayer of deliverance from us. Let us pray. Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we believers in Jesus put our hope only in you.

We believe the truth that you alone have all the power in heaven and on earth. We ask you for a spiritual cleansing of this worship space and of all our members to become new and spiritually clean so that we may glorify you.

In the name of Jesus, we ask the Holy Spirit to move now among every person here to cleanse each one now. As believers, we renounce all our past and present sins.

Sins that have been committed by us or by anyone in our family, past and present. We renounce any sinful items or idols that we have and we cast them out of our lives.

[21:54] We renounce any sinful or evil things we've said to others, to ourselves, to you. We renounce any evil people who are influencing us.

We renounce any satanic claims, curses, hexes, and oaths on us. We bind and rebuke any demon or evil spirit trying to make a home in us.

We command you evil ones in the name of Jesus to flee and go where Jesus commands you. We claim this parish as a people of spiritual strength.

Fill us with your Holy Spirit. We ask, Lord Jesus, to place your spiritual protection on this parish, to cleanse it with your holy blood, and to let it be wholly dedicated to you.

And we ask, Lord, that you protect and bless the rector you will choose for this parish, that he will assume spiritual headship and covering over this parish.

[23:07] Father, let only your Holy Spirit and the holy angels of heaven ever be here now and always through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.