ONLY GOD CAN DRIVE OUT DEMONS

Jan. 28, 2018 Mark 1:21-28

Dear Friends in Christ: Have you ever seen, known or talked to a demon possessed person? Demon possession didn’t just happen in the days of Jesus. It’s been common all thru history. Why? Very simply, if you do not have the Spirit of God in you, you have the spirit of Satan in you.

There are many scary movies about demon possession that scare you half to death. That’s a movie.

In reality, as you walk thru the mall or in a store, you are rubbing shoulders with people who don’t believe in Jesus and therefore do not have God’s spirit but have the devil’s spirit.

In our text today we see Jesus going into the synagogue at Capernaum. Synagogues were created by the Jews who were in captivity in Babylon after the first temple in Jerusalem was destroyed. They met there to hear God’s word, worship and pray.

Jesus went into synagogues to teach the Word of God as did the Apostle Paul. As Many Jews converted to the Christian faith, they could no longer meet in the synagogues so they gathered elsewhere on Sundays, the same day that Jesus rose from the dead.

On this day in the Capernaum synagogue, the people were astonished at the teaching of Jesus. Jesus spoke with authority---after all, He spoke as God didn’t He?

The Scribes and Pharisees just quoted their old rabbinical authorities, not getting around to expounding on the Word of God itself. Kind of like listening to a lecture.

Jesus, on the other hand, spoke the clear Word of God. He showed people their sins. He told them He had come to save then, and He directed them how to live godly lives.

We have a good example of His teaching in Matthew, chapters 5,6 and 7; the sermon on the Mount. Here Jesus says clearly: “You have heard it said, you shall not murder. But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, you fool! Will be liable to the hell of fire.”

The people were not used to this straightforward teaching that was without endless scholarly explanations and references to Jewish authorities.

When Jesus spoke, they were hearing God talking with them. In fact, God was standing right in front of them. They could see the sins they needed to confess. They could see the forgiveness washing the guilt and dirty feelings out of their hearts. They were saved. They were refreshed. Jesus , as we say, was a breath of fresh air in the stagnant atmosphere of their lives.

Now, as Jesus was teaching, a man with an unclean spirit(he was demon possessed) 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.”

The devil and his minions, the forces of darkness and evil do know Jesus and they fear Him for He is God and they are not. Remember when Jesus drove the demons out of the man and let them go into a herd of pigs and the pigs ran into the sea and drowned?

Jesus, spoke---“Be silent, and come out of him.” They had no choice but to obey the command of God.

Once again, the people were amazed. Jesus had authority that they had never seen before.

What can we learn from this portion of Scripture? We must accept that there are demon possessed people in our midst. They appear to be normal in many ways. But as the Scriptures say, ‘you can tell them by their works.’ If someone is not obedient to God’s Word; does not live a Christian life; is obviously marching thru life to a different tune-----God’s Spirit is not in them but another spirit.

Demons are very real and powerful spirit beings. They are angels who fell from heaven and they roam the earth, trying to get even with God by tempting mankind, leading them into sin after sin. Crime, drugs, sex before marriage, cheating spouses, disobedient children, anger, hatred, holding grudges and on and on.

But we have learned that demons are no match for Jesus. They fear and must obey the Word of God.

So, what can we do? Always be ready to tell someone about Jesus. What He has done. What He means to you. The Word of God is powerful and changes lives. To someone who is a stranger to church and worship, we can relate how God Condemns sinners to hell-fire, but Jesus came to earth as our Savior, died to pay for our sins and as we believe this, our sins are forgiven and heaven is our home for all eternity.

C.S. Lewis was a professor of Medieval and Renaissance literature at Cambridge University who was a reluctant convert to Christianity in 1931 and became a Christian apologist---all due to the power of the Word of God.

As God’s Word spreads the devil must give way and so we hear of people coming to faith, attending church, getting baptized, being saved. This, my friends, is what we are here for. God can use us to drive the dark forces of evil from the lives of people. We are to plant the wonderful seed of God’s Word so that it can grow faith in the hearts of people. What a blessing each of us can be to a lost soul.