

# Pentwater Bible Church

*Gospel of Mark*

*Message 11*

*June 8, 2014*



Dante Illuminating Florence with his poem by Domenico di Michelino cir. 1465

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## The Book of Mark Message Eleven The Lord Jesus Cast Out Demons

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Close up of Albrecht Durer's The Knight, Death, and The Devil Cir 1511

### TEACHING & CASTING OUT DEMONS

Mark 1:21-34

*<sup>21</sup> And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught. <sup>22</sup> And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes. <sup>23</sup> And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, <sup>24</sup> Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. <sup>25</sup> And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. <sup>26</sup> And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him. <sup>27</sup> And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine*

*is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him. <sup>28</sup> And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee <sup>29</sup> And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. <sup>30</sup> But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell him of her. <sup>31</sup> And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them. <sup>32</sup> And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils. <sup>33</sup> And all the city was gathered together at the door. <sup>34</sup> And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him. (KJV).*

## THE DIVINE AUTHORITY OF JESUS

### Mark 1:21-22

*<sup>21</sup> And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught. <sup>22</sup> And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes (KJV).*

As Jesus and His apostles travelled in the Galilean region, they went to Capernaum which is on the northwest side of the Sea of Galilee. It was the largest of the many fishing villages on the Sea. Jesus moved there from Nazareth (Matthew 4:12-13). At that time it had significant wealth brought in from the fishing industry and the many Roman soldiers who were stationed there. In addition to fishing, trade was also an important source of income, and the town had a Roman tax polling station. Capernaum was on the main road between Egypt and Mesopotamia, in the tetrarchy (the term was used to describe four independent portions of a kingdom that were ruled under separate leaders) of Herod Antipas and near the border of the tetrarchy of Philip, which necessitated a taxation station. Movement between each Roman tetrarch caused the collection of a tax. Since Capernaum lay on the political border separating Herod Antipas' tetrarchy of Galilee from Gaulanitis, ruled by his brother Philip, it was the location of a customs house (Matthew 9:9). The apostle Matthew was a tax collector in this region. This town suffered great sin and decadence because of the many pagan influences there.

The Temple in Jerusalem was too far for the Jews to travel on the Sabbath to worship as required under the Mosaic Law. Beginning in the days of Ezra in the Second Temple Period (Cir. 450 B.C.) ten families would start a synagogue for worship and teaching. At that time it was men and boys only. On the Sabbath the Jewish men would hear prayers, read the Scriptures and have a teacher interpret for them. Many of the regions a distance from Jerusalem would not have a permanent teacher so visiting instructors would come and bring them a message as well as Scriptural interpretation. Therefore the custom of that day allowed anyone qualified to stand and speak. Because they asked Jesus to speak indicates His reputation as a teacher preceded Him. Jesus was recognized as a teacher,

even by his opponents (Mark 12:19). There is no evidence that he had received any formal training. Certainly he was not a typical rabbi.



Map by Bible Maps



White Synagogue at Capernaum (cir. 250 AD), Photo by Julianna Egedus

As a result it was Jesus' practice to immediately seek out the local synagogue when He came into a town. Fifteen times Mark indicated that Jesus taught (also v. 22; 2:13; 4:1–2; 6:2, 6, 34; 8:31; 9:31; 10:1; 11:17; 12:14, 35; 14:49), and twelve times he referred to him as a teacher. This gives us a clear indication of what the role of the Church is supposed to

be. It is to teach the people the Whole Counsel of God. The Lord Jesus stood to speak on the Sabbath day and amazed the people listening to Him. They had never heard on speak with such authority. Many synagogue teachers had quoted the more authoritative traditional rabbis in their messages. But Jesus had no need to do that because He is God The Son. He knew exactly what the Scriptures means because He wrote them. Mark says, the scribes appeal to traditions from the past (Mark 7:6–9) but Jesus announces new things, which are coming (Mark 1:14–15; 2:21–22). Jesus was presenting a challenge to the present Jewish religious establishment. So because of His challenging the establishment and having an authoritative teaching His fame spread quickly. Beside the proclamation of the Kingdom being at hand we are not told exactly what the specific teaching was only that it was His doctrine. Mark contrasts it with what the Scribes of His day taught. The word scribes is found twenty-one times in Mark. It is meant to be teachers of the law. They were not just copyists but scholars and therefore experts in the interpretation of the law. Their interpretations, which in the time of Jesus existed only in oral form (*Halakha*) and are therefore called the oral tradition (Mark 7:5–13). This constituted a second law that came to be as important as the Mosaic Law. Ezra was the first such scribe mentioned in Scripture (Ezra 7:6, 11, 12, 21). Jesus denounced them later as not knowing the Scriptures and binding the people with their own constricting rules (Matthew 23).

#### CASTING OUT DEMONS

Mark 1:23-28

*<sup>23</sup> And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, <sup>24</sup> Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. <sup>25</sup> And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. <sup>26</sup> And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him. <sup>27</sup> And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him. <sup>28</sup> And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee (KJV).*

Within the synagogue a man appeared who was demon possessed and recognizing Jesus he cried out, *Saying, “Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.”* This man was possessed with man demons. What is important to recognize here is the fact that the demons that live outside time and space recognized Him. They knew Him because He came from the Spirit World before He entered the womb of Mary. They asked Jesus, *“Art thou come to destroy us?”* He immediately caused the demons to leave the man. Submitting to Jesus’ authority, the evil spirits convulsed (tore) (Mark 9:26) the possessed man, and with a loud shriek, left him. Now the people in the synagogue had two events to cause them to spread the word of Jesus, the authoritative teaching and the exorcism. The fact that the demons recognized and obeyed Him caused them even more

consternation. The demonic spirits are known in the Scriptures as unclean or evil because they cause people to be distant from God and they lead people to unclean associations and activities which are outside of God's Will. Jesus is perfectly spiritually clean because He is sinless. After a person becomes a believer he or she throughout their life is sanctified. This is a gradual process of becoming more Christ like or nearing sinless. So over time while we are on the earth we become spiritually cleaner. However, God looks at us through the lens of the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus and declares us sinless for the purposes of being connected to Him. If we are lead into sinful activities by the demons we become temporarily separated from God.

The New Testament tells of one third of the angels defected with Satan and "kept not their first estate" and "are reserved unto judgment of the great day" (II Peter 2: 4; Jude 1:6). Most competent conservative Bible teachers view the demons as the fallen angels. The Bible is vastly superior in its exposition of demonology compared to the superstitious exaggeration in the general population. Demons do exist, because the Bible says they do. In the Old Testament they were the power behind the idols prohibited by God for the Israelites to worship. In Hebrew, the demons are called Shedhim (Deuteronomy 32: 17; Psalm 106: 36-37) as well as Seirim (Leviticus 17:7; II Chronicles 11: 15; Isaiah 13:21; 34: 14).

The New Testament scripture has much to say about the demons:

- They exist (James 2: 19; Revelation 9:20).
- They know who Jesus is (Luke 4: 41).
- They cannot disobey Jesus' commands (Matthew 12:29).
- They are organized under Satan (Matthew 12:26; Ephesians 6:12).
- They know their rulers (Luke 8:31; Revelation 9:11).
- They are characterized as foul, unclean spirits (Luke 4:33; 6:18; Revelation 18:2).
- They are deceitful and perform miracles through unsaved human beings (1 Timothy 4:1; Revelation 16:14).
- They can possess unsaved humans (Mark 1:32).
- They are cast out of humans by Jesus and his disciples (Matt 15:22, 28; Luke 9:1, 42; 10:17).
- They can be rebuked (Mark 5:8).
- They know their final doom (Matthew 25:41).
- They are served by the unsaved (1 Corinthians 10:20).
- They cannot be served by those that are in Christ (1 Corinthians 10:21).

The demons have keen and supernatural knowledge. It is not as powerful as God's holy knowledge or our saving knowledge. They are confirmed in evil, never seek forgiveness and never plead for purity. When they made the choice to follow Satan they rendered themselves permanently unable to return to God. They know that Jesus is the Lord of the spirit-world but don't have any spiritual trust in Him. They worship Christ but not in adoration or joy in Holy Communion. They bend to His will in resentment and hate. They, like Satan, have limited knowledge and ceaselessly attempt to thwart God's plans and purposes. They are depraved and completely morally corrupt. These evil beings have

a desire to corrupt and are frequently called unclean in the Bible (Matthew 10:1; Mark 1: 27; 3: 11; Luke 4: 36; Acts 8:7; Revelation 16: 13).

Where are the demons today? It is an impetuous conclusion to say that there are no demons active today; much has been written about demonic possession. Many cases of demonic activity up to and including possession (I Peter 5:8) have been validated. Satan walks about like a lion seeking whom he may devour, Peter tells us to be sober and vigilant. Paul tells us that Satan is like an “angel of light” (II Corinthians 11: 14). These two revealed characteristics of Satan are important for us to consider and both of these apostles want us to “be aware.” Satan and his demons will masquerade as an angel of light to deceive us into sin so he can devour us. They are also adeptly deceptive throughout the various ages of human history from the beginning of the Church.

In the primitive societies the Devil can move about openly as a roaring lion. Missionaries within these societies report much open demonic activity and possession. Only unbelievers can be possessed. In nominally Christian polite society (Christendom), Satan has to deceive people to turn away from God in order to achieve his goals. Those are the regions of the world that have standards of living, which are based on Biblical standards. This drives the demons into using tools of deception. Some of the deceptions are:

- Rejecting supernaturalism altogether.
- Rejecting the authority of God’s Word.
- Giving rise to rational thought instead of revealed truth.
- Causing people to be unaware of the origin of their thoughts.
- Causing people to think that no disease has a direct demonic cause.
- Causing people to think that some sins are really “not so bad”.
- Corrupting doctrinal integrity of the Scriptures so some parts of Scripture are thought of as more important than others.
- Causing the belief that magic is harmless (not sleight of hand).
- Causing a belief that paganism is harmless in its three root forms; magic, divination (seeking fortune tellers) and necromancy (seeking communication with the dead).
- Corrupting the Hebrew Mazzeroth (God’s message in the star constellations of Christ and the Gospel) with astrology.
- Causing myth to come into Christianity replacing truth.
- Causing a belief that all religions are equal, whatever the doctrine.
- Causing schisms in Christian fellowship over doctrine.
- Bringing deception in world governments controlled by wicked rulers and dictators to renounce Christianity and provide a channel for the demons to have a great effect on large numbers of people.

By far the greatest field of activity for Satan and his demons is the Church because Satan can influence believers. The body of believers is charged with bringing converts into saving grace knowledge of Christ and His work. The Church is to teach the truth of the Bible. The powers of darkness are increasing in our day and age and dupe the world

against the truth of the Bible and historic Christianity. Satan is dedicated to turning people from God. When men do believe the gospel, Satan exerts every effort to turn them away from God's will (Matthew 13:19). He knows that once they are saved they are beyond his power to destroy so he seeks to corrupt (Numbers 25: 1-3; 31: 16; James 4: 4; Revelation 2: 14). Therefore, he determines to render as much damage as he can, seeking to ruin their Christian life and testimony for God.

Satan is unrelenting and pitiless in his hatred for God and the people of God. What makes the devil a fearful foe is the fact of his great power. This is augmented by the assistance of the vast number of fallen angels or demons. Consequently, satanic forces constitute a mighty, evil, spiritual reality to be seriously reckoned with by the entire fallen race, both redeemed and unredeemed. We must be aware of the demonic activity and what we are charged with to defeat it.

In its spiritual war, the Church must be knowledgeable about the stratagems of our enemy. In physical wars, military strategists are keenly aware of the necessity of knowing the enemy. Accordingly, they employ intricate networks of intelligence and counterintelligence. Missions involving espionage are frequently as crucial to winning a war as actual battles. Without intelligence of the enemy's strength and position, victory in any military encounter would be doubtful. Yet believers mostly display an obvious disinterest in what the Bible reveals about Satan and demons. The only sound approach is to know the enemy. Only as his wiles of the Devil (Ephesians 6:11) are revealed will the believer be able to anticipate and outmaneuver him. Satan's chief tactics are to hide his identity and his attacks. The Christian must recognize him and anticipate his moves.

Only as the believer knows the powers of darkness will he be able to win against them in his superior position and strength in Christ. The rampant demon activity of these last days (1 Timothy 4:1) means we must "Know our enemy!"

*1 Timothy 4: 1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;*

Although we do not always know this enemy, one thing is sure. Satan *always* knows us! He is thoroughly acquainted with all of God's children and is quite aware of those who fall for his strategies. He also knows those who recognize and count on their position in Christ and who find and fulfill God's will for their lives. These saints are what the devil fears most, for they constitute the deadliest threat to his plans and ambitions. It is to us that he attacks in the subtlest manner. He brings us into temptation for the activities, which we know we should not be engaged. We fail to realize or admit his involvement and think that our activities are harmless or out of the purview of anyone else including God.

The principal danger the Christian faces is whether the demonic world is credible or not. The problem is not unbelief but credulity. Satan stands ready to take advantage of this in an era when occult religion and liberalism is threatening to replace pure biblical



Christianity. Liberalism produces a fuzzy imprecise rendering of the Bible reducing its credibility. This draws people away from the truth and protection of God's Word causing a spiritual vacuum. The occultic religions seek to invade the vacuum opened by liberalism. Satan then is let in to deceive in greater measure. One example of this is to reject the activity of the demons altogether and fail to discern a condition of the general nature of the fall vis-à-vis direct involvement of demons. For example, in demon-ridden China of the nineteenth century the natives had no difficulty differentiating between mental disease and demon-possession. Dr. Alfred Lechler, a German psychologist, <sup>1</sup>stressed the need to distinguish between the diseased and the demonic. In this connection he showed the difference between schizophrenia, epilepsy, depression, neurosis, psychopathy, senile dementia, and the demonic. Christians must exercise every precaution to avoid falling prey to Satan's two popular tricks of either seeing Satan and demons in nothing or else seeing them in everything. Christians are warned in Ephesians chapter six to prevent demonic badgering by using our faith and Scripture to thwart their attempts to draw us away from the Lord.

NEXT WEEK: MARK: JESUS HEALS THE PHYSICALLY SICK

**Please call or e-mail with any questions or comments**

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<sup>1</sup> Dickason, C. Fred Demon Possession and The Christian. Crossway Publishers, Wheaton, IL 60187 1989  
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