

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Mark: Jesus, The Perfect Servant Of God

Part II: The Perfect Service Of Jesus, The Perfect Servant Of God, Mark 1:1-10:52

C. Christ's Confrontational Authority Over Demons In Serving God

(Mark 1:21-28)

I. Introduction

- A. As we learned in our first lesson in this series, Mark's Gospel presents the perfect service of God's Perfect Servant, Jesus, with Mark's focus of having rebounded unto upright Christian service from personal failure.
- B. At times, such failure arises from an inadequate respect for God's sovereign authority over demonic opposition we face, but Jesus exhibited His confrontational authority over demons in service with great application for us:

II. Christ's Confrontational Authority Over Demons In Serving God, Mark 1:21-28.

- A. As Jesus and His disciples entered Capernaum on the northwest shore of Galilee (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Mark 1:21), He immediately the next Sabbath Day entered the synagogue and taught, Mark 1:21.
- B. However, unlike the scribes who quoted the sayings of their predecessors instead of teaching by their own authority, Jesus "astounded, struck out of their senses, overwhelmed" (*exeplesonto*, Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 109) His listeners by teaching as One Who Himself had "direct authority from God," Ibid.; Mark 1:22.
- C. Conversely, the demons knew of Jesus' authority, that it was "the ultimate threat to their power and activity," so a demon possessed man present cried out, "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," Mark 1:23-24; Ibid.
- D. The expression, "What have we to do with thee" is a Hebrew idiom expressing "incompatibility of opposing forces (cf. Mark 5:7; Joshua 22:24; Judges 11:12; 2 Samuel 16:10; 19:22)," Ibid.
- E. Were Jesus to have accepted the demon's "defensive utterance (1:24)," He would have "undermined His task of confronting and defeating Satan and his forces," for "His authority over evil spirits was evidence that God's rule had come in Jesus (cf. v. 15)," Ibid. Accordingly, Jesus "sternly rebuked (*epetimesen*; cf. 4:39) the evil spirit and ordered the demon to come out of the man," Ibid.; Mark 1:25.
- F. Though the KJV claims the demon came out after he had "torn him and cried with a loud voice," the Greek term the KJV renders as "torn" is *sparasso*, "tear, pull to and fro, convulse" (Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 768), and since Jesus did not heal the man from a torn body, we hold that the correct translation should be "convulsing" instead of "torn," Mark 1:26 ESV, NIV.
- G. This conflict between Christ and the demon with Jesus victoriously exorcising the demon "greatly amazed (*ethambethesan*, "surprised, astonished," Ibid., Bible Know. Com., N. T.) onlookers, and they asked one another, "What is this?" (Mark 1:27a ESV) The question related to both Jesus' teaching in an authoritative manner and His expulsion of a demon with a mere word of command, Mark 1:27b; Ibid.
- H. Jesus' fame thus "spread . . . throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee" (Mark 1:28 ESV), a response that signaled the widespread vacuum of non-authoritative teaching in the synagogues as well as the prevalence of demonic possession (cf. Mark 1:33-34), but it also revealed the great, relieving authority of the Son of God.
- I. News of this event likely greatly affected the Gospel's author due to his own past, offering us a great lesson:
 - 1. The author of Mark's Gospel, John Mark (Ibid., Ryrie, p. 1397, "Introduction to the Gospel According to Mark") had abandoned Barnabas and Paul on their first missionary journey in Acts 13:13 shortly after Paul had been confronted by a man under Satan's influence who had tried to hinder Paul's ministry, Acts 13:6-8.
 - 2. Like Jesus in Mark 1:21-28, Paul had resisted this public confrontation in the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:9-10 with Mark 1:10), rebuking the evil party involved (Acts 13:11 with Mark 1:25), with the resulting astonishment and belief of the onlooker(s) (Acts 13:12 with Mark 1:27).
 - 3. Yet, for John Mark at the time, such conflict may have been too unnerving, so he left the ministry, only later to rebound to effective service, having learned the need to resist the devil strong in faith, 1 Pet. 5:8-9.

Lesson: *When facing angelic conflict in God's service of making disciples, first Jesus and later Paul, by the Holy Spirit's power, resisted the devil, strong in the faith instead of yielding or fleeing from him in any way.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Jesus as God's true Servant and Savior, John 3:16; Mark 1:15. (2) If we are opposed in God's service in the angelic conflict, may we rely on the Holy Spirit to resist the devil by standing strong in the faith instead of yielding or fleeing in any way. (3) May we recall that the lack of adequate Bible exposition makes for greater angelic conflict defeat (see "II,H" above), and so keep exposed to Scripture, 1 John 2:14b.*