

Jesus Drives Out An Impure Spirit

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 03 March 2019

Preacher: Pastor Tom Kraft

[0 : 0 0] T snap of knife■■■■■ I don't know.

I don't know.

I don't know. Good morning. Today's reading is from the book of Mark, chapter 1, verses 21 to 28.

They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. The people were amazed at his teaching because he taught them as one who had authority, not as teachers of the law.

Just then a man in their synagogue, who was possessed by an impure spirit, cried out, What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.

[2 : 0 1] Be quiet, Jesus said sternly. Come out of him. The impure spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek. The people were also amazed that they asked each other, What is this? A new teaching and with authority.

He even gives orders to impure spirits, and they obey him. News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee. This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God. Doggone that kid.

They know they're not allowed to ride bikes on the sidewalk. Oh dear. There, there, Miss Rosenbach. We'll give you a hand. Hey! Stop that bike!

What's the matter? You're not allowed to ride a bike on the sidewalk. Oh, I'm sorry. Sure, I didn't know that. Well, now you know. Bike riding on the streets only. City statute 249A, Section Roman, Numeral 5.

[3 : 0 9] I won't do it again, sir. I promise. All right. See that you don't. Oh, watch it.

Doggone it, I warned him, and he deliberately rode on the sidewalk again. Is that true, son? Did you hear Officer 5 warn you? Yes, sir. What would you do it again for? Because I wanted to.

Will you let go of my bike? You have no right to hold my bike like that. You just simmer down there, young fella. You're the one that's been riding around on the sidewalk knocking folks over, ain't you? I'll tell my dad about this. Then you'll be sorry.

Oh, go ahead and tell him and see if we care. Nah! Nah! Young man, I'm gonna have to take this bike and hold it. My bike? You can't take my bike! It's my bike!

That won't do you any good. That won't do you any good. You can't take my bike! It's my bike! Now, you listen here, young fella. When an officer gives you a warning, you're supposed to mind.

[4 : 1 2] But I expect you'll know we're not fooling when we take this bike and keep it for a week or two. You'll see! I'll tell my father! Good, good. You tell him to come right on down and we'll talk about it. Yeah. Now get on off of there.

Now go on home. Cocky little devil, ain't he? Yeah. Imagine him talking to us like that, an arrogant little cuss. Thinks he can make up his own rules.

Yeah. Thinks he can make up his own rules. Who sets the rules for us? Who decides things?

Who makes decisions for our lives? Who do we give authority to? This passage has a verse in it that I've always found fascinating.

It says, Jesus taught with authority, not like the teachers and scribes. I've often wondered whether I teach with authority or I teach like the scribes and teachers of the law.

[5 : 1 0] Authority is someone who has the ability and has the right to tell us what to do. Jesus, obviously, we know because we've read the end of the book, is God.

And God has the authority to tell us as followers of God who we should be and what we should do. The teachers of the law instead look to the traditions.

They look to the rules. They look to what interpretation they could figure out to try and discern what they thought was right or what they thought was wrong.

It's not a bad thing, but it isn't true authority. Who do we give authority to? Who can tell us what to do?

If we saw the red lights flashing and we had an officer pull us over, would we act with him like this young boy did? If so, they might take your car away. Do we give authority to the government?

[6 : 0 7] To our teachers or our boss? To our parents or our church or even our pastor? When I was ordained by the United Methodist Church, a bishop laid hands on me and said, Take thou authority.

Take authority to preach, to teach, to administer the sacraments and to order the life of the church. That's where my authority comes from in this congregation, but not anywhere else.

Who do we listen to? When do we listen to them? I was at a party with my wife, who was in the Air Force at the time, and it was at the house of a daughter of a general.

And the general ordered me to get into the pool and have a drink with him. So I got in the pool and I sat next to him, and I said to him, You know, I'm not in your military.

You can't order me to get in the pool. I said, it's a little weird. You could probably order my wife to get in the pool, but you can't order me to get in the pool. So if you want me to get in the pool, you ask me as a friend. Well, we've been good friends ever since then.

[7 : 1 8] Because people don't generally talk to generals that way. I didn't know that at the time. I didn't know that I was being an impertinent spouse and not treating him with the respect that he was due. Who gives authority to us?

Who has the right to tell us what to do? It says that they were amazed at his teaching. And we don't always think of Jesus as a teacher. We have this kind of notion that Jesus is a carpenter.

His father was a carpenter. And I imagine Joseph knew how to do some carpentry work. But in the Bible, when they talk about Jesus, they call him rabbi, which means teacher. In fact, it means a teacher in the community of faith.

So he went into the synagogue. And nobody thought it strange that Jesus got up to teach because he was a teacher. But we live in a world with changing authority.

In fact, when I was growing up years ago, they used to tell us to challenge authority. I don't know if any of you remember that day and age. Challenge authority. Question it. Try to decide what's right and what's wrong.

[8 : 2 3] The rules keep changing. We have a fish fry coming up this Friday. And in the western New York area, we eat a lot of fish on Friday. That goes back to the tradition in the Roman Catholic Church that you don't eat meat on Fridays.

But now it's okay. Especially on St. Patrick's Day. Right? Why? Why is it okay one time and not another time? Do we still trust our leaders?

Do we trust the police? Do we trust our president? Do we trust our teachers? Do we trust our pastors? Do we trust our church? And how do we know?

One of my professors in seminary said, one of the greatest questions that we can answer is that some things change and some things stay the same. Which are which and why?

How do we know whether something has changed? This little boy was challenging the police officers. And he said, you better listen to me or I'm going to go tell my father.

[9 : 28] Sheriff? Yes, sir. You the boy's father? That's right. Simon Winkler. Andy Taylor. Now then, what's this all about? 249A, section Roman numeral 5. Passenger carrying wheel vehicle making passage and or transcending area designated for pedestrian traffic only.

Suspect duly warned, flaunted said warning, and ignoring same repeated offense within a 24-hour period. All right, so he rode his bike on the sidewalk. I was there, Mr. Winkler.

Arnold was given a warning and continued to ride his bicycle on the sidewalk. The offense was clearly defined under normal weather conditions. There was plenty of room. I wasn't hurting anybody. People are coming in and out of stores on Main Street every minute.

You never know when somebody's going to walk right out in front of you. Everybody's against me. Oh, there, there, son. Get him to have a little fun. Now you see what you've done? You got the boy all upset.

Was it such a crime? Seems to me you people would have more important things to do than go around frightening children. Now look here, Mr. Winkler. Arnold was warned and continued to ride his bicycle on the sidewalk.

[10 : 31] Now we're going to impound that bicycle and he learns to use it according to regulations. Oh, for heaven's sake, Sheriff. Can't you see this as a very sensitive child? Obviously you don't understand him.

Arnold's a good boy. You just don't understand him. Oh, I think I understand him. He's the law of the law, Mr. Winkler. I think I understand him. I would not have told my father if I got in trouble with the police because I guarantee you he would not have gone down to talk to the sheriff.

Andy reminded him they had something called a woodshed out back. Most of you have no idea what that means, but people of my generation remember. Things change, though.

And good people often disagree about what's right and wrong. So how do we know how to interpret good for bad? How, as Christians, do we know where we should put authority?

In our church, in the United Methodist Church, in this congregation, we say that the Bible is the first place for authority. We take from this book that's given to us over thousands of years the understanding of what God wants us to have.

[11 : 44] Now, even in the book, things change from generation to generation. But we look here first to try and understand what is it that God wants us to know as truth. We talk about it.

We don't expect people to just accept things blindly, but talk about it, consider it with one another. We look at the traditions, what's gone before, what other people have taught, because obviously, we want to know the wisdom of what has come down to us through the generations.

And then we try to understand what God is saying to us. Because in the end, we need to pray. And we need to pray that the Holy Spirit will guide our hearts, the Holy Spirit will guide our minds and our souls to understand what He's speaking to us.

Because the Holy Spirit is truly the answer to understanding God. in John chapter 16, it says to us, I have much more to say to you, more than you can bear now.

But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth. He will not speak of His own. He will speak only what He hears and He will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify me because it is from me that He will receive what He will make known to you.

[12 : 58] He receives from God what He makes known to us. All that belongs to the Father's mind. That is why I said, the Spirit will receive from me what He will make known to you.

So when we're trying to discern and when we don't agree, which we will, I guarantee you, if I were to put this group of people together and start asking you what you agree on, I bet most things you wouldn't agree on.

How many agree with that? Now that's about the only thing you agree on, right? Because honestly, we come from all kinds of backgrounds and ideas and good people can disagree and so we need to pray and pray and then pray again.

And then we need to do something that's hard. We have to learn to trust the Holy Spirit and the people that we know believe in God.

We have to trust that the Holy Spirit is speaking to them just as clearly as the Holy Spirit is speaking to us and that maybe, maybe, they have truth that we don't understand.

[14 : 05] Because the goal is to find the truth of God. Amen? The goal is not for us to get our way. The goal is not for us to win. The goal is to find out what does God want us to do and what does God want us to be and sometimes that's not so easy to see.

Sometimes we agree to disagree but disagree in the love we have for each other through Jesus Christ and believe and trust that God is working in all of us.

Authority. Authority is a difficult thing in our lives. We've come to be suspect of authority. Not sure if authority is doing right. Not sure who we can trust.

Not confident in who we can believe in. Even people like me are under suspicion today. And that's because some authority doesn't deserve respect.

Some authority doesn't deserve our allegiance. Some is simply evil. In this passage it says that there was a man sitting in the service worshipping with these people.

[15 : 15] Just like a gathering like this. And it says that he had an impure spirit or a demon who was in him. And he started to speak up and he said to Jesus what do you have to do with us Jesus of Nazareth?

Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are the Holy One of God. It's fascinating about the demon he reveals a lot of things about the demonic right in that word.

First of all it says that people who aren't followers of God can be gathered in the place of God and sometimes they can tell lies and deceptions that hurt.

It says that they know who Jesus is and that this man was not simply having some sort of mental health issues. There's many things that confuse our minds from chemicals to neurological dysfunctions to trauma but this is not what this is.

This is actually a spirit of evil that's come upon this person physically taking hold of them. Filled with evil.

[16 : 37] And some people are honestly we hate to say this but possessed by evil. There was a story of a horse and a snake and the snake was on one side of the river and wanted to get to the other side and so it said to the horse would you carry me over to the other side of the river?

And the horse said I can't do that you're a snake you'll bite me. He said no I know that a lot of times I bite various different creatures but if you would do me this favor of carrying me across the river of course I wouldn't bite you because you'd be taking care of me and helping me.

And so the horse finally reluctantly agreed and allowed the snake to get on his back and they rode along they got about halfway into the river and the snake bit the horse. And the horse looked at it and said dude seriously you bit me!

And the snake said well you knew I was a snake but you put me on your back. I bite people I bite creatures that's what I do. Some people have a nature in them that's honestly from the dark side.

Now years ago when I was growing up people said demons were something of the past we don't talk about that that's just some kind of ignorance from years ago but the truth is there are demonic powers in this world if we believe in the power of the Holy Spirit of the goodness of God we also need to recognize the Bible tells us that there are demons there are fallen angels there are agents of Satan working within our lives and I have seen them in people I have talked to them I've cast them out of people I've seen them break people they're cold they're dark and they're real and Satan gives them authority and if we give them authority they take control of our lives and change it for the worst that's why Jesus told this demon to be quiet shut your mouth right because because he knew that it's in the lies and it's in the deceptions that so many times we find ourselves confused and not knowing what to believe because Satan has a way of telling half truths to us sharing with us part of the story so that we start to doubt what we really believe authority gives power and Satan has given power to his demons and if we work with them then we're under

[19 : 13] Satan's curse but if we give power to God then we're under the blessings of God let me tell you something about demons they know their destruction is coming have you come to destroy us he says to Jesus because they know that their destruction is coming they're just not sure when if you read the book of Revelations it says they'll be tossed into a lake of fire in Matthew it says it this way he will say to those on his left depart from me you who are cursed into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels they know their doom is coming so what do you think they want to do you ever hear the phrase misery likes company they want to take as many of us down with them as they can so what do we do about this what do we do about this problem and this difficulty well Jesus has authority that's what they were saying in verse 27 when they said he teaches a new teaching with authority and even gives orders to the impure spirits and they obey him

Jesus has authority over all that is evil all that is dark to cast it out there's a passage at the end of Matthew people call the great commission and it says that we should go out and share the faith of Jesus Christ but it also says something about authority Jesus came to them and said all authority in heaven and earth has been given to me therefore go and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the father and the son and the holy spirit and teaching them to obey everything I've commanded and surely I am with you always even to the very end of the age well that is about us going out it's not about us going out alone it's about us going out with Jesus with God God being with us he not only has the authority he grants the authority to us he gives us the ability to overcome all the darkness that can affect our lives now the demons don't want to come out he said so in fact I don't know if you noticed it said us because demons tend to come in plurals when you let evil into your life you start to find that you have all sorts of problems developing all sorts of things that demonic will use to hurt us even good things and the demons are terrified of Jesus but Jesus says to us don't be afraid because God gives us the ability to overcome the darkness in our lives but to do so we have to make a choice in Matthew chapter 6

Jesus says you cannot serve two masters either you will hate the one and love the other or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other you cannot serve two masters in this case he was talking about God and money but he could have been talking about almost anything you cannot serve God and Satan you know we have a belief in our culture that somehow there's a secular place an in-between place a place where you know you're kind of neutral there is no neutral in this world you're either under the dominion and the destruction and the curse of Satan or you're under the blessings and the power and the joy of God and God wants us to make a choice we call it repenting or to turn towards God because even Joshua told us in Deuteronomy that we need to make a choice this day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death blessings and curses now choose life so that you and your children may live the decisions you make don't just affect you they affect the ones that come after you again and again and again today we made a decision for a little child named Sydney to bring blessings into her life not just today but for the rest of her life to make a decision for God

Jesus wants us to make that change he doesn't force us to in fact even this man he didn't do anything with until he actually identified himself because to be honest with you until you recognize that you have a problem until you are willing to admit there's something wrong you won't find any answer to your problem 80% of the troubles we have in our lives are because of self-delusion that we don't want to believe that there's a problem the greatest lie of Satan so we need to choose which spirit will guide us the one that leads to good or the one that leads to evil it's like we got that angel on one shoulder and the devil on the other ever see those little cartoons so there's a saying I was taught by a trucker that the state police have seven is heaven eight is great nine you're mine

I like that so in my car I actually have the ability to set it to tell me if I go over seven miles over the speed limit so I had a friend riding with me who's a pastor the other day and we're riding down the road and the voice goes the speed limit is 45 miles an hour he's like who said that where did that come from it happened several times on that trip I'm not sure exactly what that means but this little voice would speak to me from time to time and tell me when I was doing what was wrong now you'd say that's because I have no respect for the speed limit but let me tell you what happens every time that voice comes on my foot on the gas pedal comes off automatically I may decide to reapply it but it's an automatic reflex I hear that little voice and my foot goes boo and I look at the speedometer to see what I'm doing because I set that voice

[25 : 31] I want to know when I'm doing wrong and God doesn't guide us in what we're doing wrong God doesn't send the Holy Spirit to correct us because he wants to hurt us he wants to help us so that I can go flying by that state trooper at 7 miles over the speed limit and wave and they don't bother me because 7 is heaven 8 is great 9 you're in trouble is it worth it is it worth it for one more mile an hour I don't think so is it worth it for whatever Satan might seduce us into thinking is good in our lives to let our lives end in destruction not just eternal destruction which it does but destruction of our relationships destruction of who we are when the demons take control of our lives all they do is break us down and hurt us lead us into more brokenness lead us into more pain more suffering more addictions more problems and God doesn't want us to do that

John chapter 16 said to us when the Holy Spirit of truth comes he will guide you into all truth he will not speak on his own he will speak what he hears and he will tell you what is yet to come the Holy Spirit of God will guide you will show you what you should be and what you should be doing will keep you safe if you're willing to listen we can choose victory we have a choice because greater is the one that is in us than the one that is in the world greater is the Holy Spirit of God than Satan will ever be when Satan was cast out of heaven God didn't do it I don't know if you know that he sent the angel Michael to do it Satan isn't even close to God's league so when the Holy Spirit of God enters our lives we don't have to have any fear of evil I don't have fear of Satan

I don't have fear of the demons they're kind of scary weird things but I've confronted them and they flee just as they fled Jesus they're more afraid of the Spirit of God than we should ever be afraid of them the teachers offered an empty religion a faith based only in the head not in the soul now I was supposed to bring a power tool but I didn't so you have to imagine I've got a circular saw in my hand just use your minds you can do it it's not that hard picture I got this big circular saw and I'm saying so can I cut something with this and you'd all say no but it's a saw and it's got a blade and it's sharp why can't I cut anything with this circular saw because it has no power don't you see the cord's not plugged in it can't do anything and that's where religion becomes religion becomes a saw with no power religion becomes a faith that doesn't have the ability to give us the victory but if we allow the Holy Spirit into our hearts we can overcome any forces of darkness that God throws at us

I know some of you don't like me talking about demons it sounds so primitive but the truth is they exist and they're out there to destroy us and we need to know when we're facing something like that Ephesians tells us our struggle isn't against flesh and blood but against the rulers against the authorities against the powers of this dark world against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms therefore put on the full armor of God so that when the day of evil comes you may be able to stand your ground and after you have done everything to stand in the grace and the power and the wonder of God and so what did they do it says that they spread the news about Jesus everywhere the good news of God that God gives victory in all that we are and all that we do there was a time when Jesus was gathered with his disciples and he was talking to Peter who had just confessed his faith and Jesus said that this faith in God is the cornerstone of the church and this is what he said

I tell you you are Peter which means the rock and on this rock of faith I will build my church and the gates of hell will not overcome it I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven if we draw close to God you will have that power you will have that strength you will stand in the presence of God and he will give you the victory to overcome all brokenness all pain all struggle that you might ever ever face somebody whispered to me that there is such a thing called cruise control on cars that's true but you know what I've learned is I can override that voice and push that cruise control to any setting I desire God has a voice that's speaking to our hearts the Holy Spirit of God itself but God won't force you to do what's right

[31 : 15] God won't make you follow his ways God wants you to want to be with him you have to make a choice choose to stay life choose the power of God in the name of Jesus Christ all demons are cast out of this place and these people now live in the freedom that God gives you the joy the wonder the possibilities and may God give you the strength to overcome all brokenness and live in his peace go in God's grace amen to aikortem I am I am I am I am am y thank you for our Mickey mentale music is the one you are are are I I am I I