

JESUS BEGAN HIS PUBLIC MINISTRY

TEXT: MARK 1:14-28

Introduction:

1. We left off last time at verses 12 and 13. Our Lord was tempted by Satan in the wilderness.
2. After our Lord was baptized (1:9, 10), and after He was tempted by the devil, He began His public ministry.
3. I should point out that between Mark 1:13 and 14 comes the events recorded in the Gospel of John from 1:19 through 3:36. John the Baptist was not imprisoned immediately after our Lord's temptation (Mark 1:14).
4. The detailed account of the imprisonment and execution of John the Baptist is recorded in Mark 6:17-20.
5. Our Lord's message was the same as John the Baptist's – "repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:15). It is the same message we preach today.
6. In Acts 20:21, the apostle Paul preached, "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."
7. Our Lord "came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God" (Mark 1:14). He preached, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand" (1:15).
8. The kingdom of God was at hand because the King was present with them. But the people of Israel rejected their king.
9. But the kingdom of God will come. Jesus taught His disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10).
10. "Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew his brother..." (Mark 1:16). These were the first two apostles.
11. Next came the brothers James and John (1:19, 20). Then Mark 1:21 says, "And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day He entered into the synagogue, and taught."
12. In the synagogue that day was "a man with an unclean spirit" (1:23). Let us summarize: Our Lord began His public ministry by getting baptized. Then our Lord was tempted by Satan. Then He went into Galilee and began preaching. Then He started calling His disciples. Then He went into the synagogue to teach the Word of God.
13. And it was there in the synagogue that our Lord was confronted by a demon-possessed man. This sequence of events in Mark 1 serves to remind us that we

are in a fierce battle with Satan and his demons (cf. Mark 1:32-34). We ought to be aware of this.

14. We are only halfway into the first chapter of Mark, and already we see our Lord tempted by Satan; we see mention is made of John the Baptist being put in prison; and then a demon-possessed man is crying out to Jesus in the synagogue.
15. Tonight, I would like for us to look at the demonic resistance to the work of God (preaching, winning souls, organizing a church, etc.). The Gospel is going forth but it is being ferociously opposed by Satan and his demons. It will continue this way until Satan and his demons are cast into the lake of fire.

I. DEMONS ARE RELIGIOUS

1. There is a tendency to overlook this but actually Satan and his demons specialize in religion. They are very good at it. Notice that this demon-possessed man was “in the synagogue” (1:23).
2. This demoniac was not in a brothel, not in a dope-den, not in a gambling joint, not in a nightclub – he was “in the synagogue.”
3. You are just as likely to find the devil in a synagogue as you are in a bar. In fact, Revelation 2:9 refers to “the synagogue of Satan.”
4. Demons hang around synagogues, mosques, churches, temples, and so on. Just look at all the mischief in the world caused by unregenerate religionists (e.g. Muslim terrorists). Many of these dangerous people are filled with devils.
5. Demons are behind all false religion. First Timothy 4:1 refers to “doctrines of devils.”
6. Some conservatives and traditionalists draw a contrast between “religious” people (or “people of faith”) and secularists (atheists, agnostics, humanists, etc.).
7. We hear talk of America’s “Judeo-Christian values.” What is often overlooked is the obvious fact that most religious people are lost and on their way to hell.
8. I am glad “talk radio” has provided a conservative alternative to the radical leftwing mainstream media. However, it has been my observation that much of talk radio is ungodly – rock music, vulgar talk (even cursing), hateful speech, boasting and bragging, etc.
9. I am a conservative, but I realize there are plenty of conservatives in hell. Jesus said, “Ye must be born again” (John 3:7).
10. Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6).

11. I often listen to the radio when I am driving. While scanning my dial I occasionally tune in to 970 AM, which up until very recently supposed to be a Christian radio station.
12. Dennis Prager, Michael Medved, Dr. Laura, and Bill Bennett are four of their big radio hosts. They are very interesting and informative speakers. They are (for the most part) conservative. But they are not Christian.
13. Jesus said to the religious leaders of His day, “Ye are of your father the devil” (John 8:44).
14. I know two girls that were demon-possessed in the Philippines. They were both active members (not saved) in a good independent Baptist church. I have preached in their church several times.
15. They sang in the choir. One night after prayer meeting the demons began manifesting themselves. Several pastors went to the church, and after much prayer the devils left the girls. They are doing fine now.
16. I asked one of the pastors who was there his opinion on what happened.
17. He said the girls were bitter toward their parents. This same pastor (I have preached in his church also) said he also had another encounter with another demon-possessed lady.
18. She was a devout Roman Catholic who was being terrorized by a demon while saying the rosary in front of a huge idol of “Mary.” Her RC family members tried to get their priest to help but he was too drunk. (Sober priests are just as useless.)
19. So they went and got my Baptist pastor friend. After much prayer and Scripture reading, the demon came out.
20. Demons are very religious.

II. DEMONS ARE DESTRUCTIVE

1. It appears that this man had only one devil inside him (1:26). He said, “Let us alone” (1:24), perhaps referring to the devil and the man himself.
2. However, oftentimes many demons can move into a man (cf. Matt. 12:43-45).
3. Remember there were many devils inside the demoniac of Gadara (Mark 5:1-20). There were 6,000 soldiers in a Roman legion (Mark 5:9).
4. We can learn much about demonism from the account of the demoniac of Gadara (Mark 5:1-20).
 - Demons are unclean (5:2, 8).
 - They have super-human strength (5:3, 4).
 - They make people wild and uncontrollable (5:4, 5).
 - They make people want to hurt themselves and sometimes even kill themselves (5:5).

- They recognize Jesus, and sometimes even worship Him (5:6, 7). I'll say more about this in a few minutes.
 - There are many of them (5:9).
 - They love filth (5:11-13).
 - After a person is delivered from devils, he puts his clothes back on and is in his right mind (5:15).
5. The Christian has one great adversary and that is Satan, but Satan has multitudes of demons under his control, assisting him. Like Satan, these evil spirits are full of hatred toward God and they are bent on doing as much harm and as much damage as they possibly can.
 6. Spurgeon said, "It is no wonder that there is so much evil in the world when there are so many evil spirits constantly seeking to lead men astray."
 7. It is impossible to rightly understand what is going on in the world today without understanding the spirit realm.
 8. Demons are behind crime, terrorism, war, pornography, rock (including rap, etc.) music, drugs, alcohol, homosexuality, abortion, etc.
 9. People lie and steal and kill because they are following their leader Satan, and his evil spirits (John 8:44; 10:10).
 10. The devil is out to destroy people. He will use any method available – drugs, alcohol, promiscuous sex, violence, suicide, etc.
 11. You have probably heard about the police lieutenant who was in trouble for ordering the policemen to fire a Taser stun gun at a crazy naked man in Brooklyn. He recently shot himself in the head. He killed himself on his birthday. The devil is very busy at work here in NYC.
 12. In fact, two of the names for "the angel of the bottomless pit" (Rev. 9:11) are "Abaddon" (Hebrew) and "Apollyon" (Greek), which mean "Destroyer."
 13. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (I Peter 5:8).
 14. There are many demons, leading sinners astray, deceiving them, tormenting them, and eventually destroying them. The word "Legion" (Mark 5:9) also indicates that they are highly organized.
 15. The Roman Legion was a well-organized group of disciplined soldiers, obedient to the Roman emperor. In like manner, demons are well-organized and obedient to their master, the prince of the power of the air, our adversary Satan (cf. Eph. 6:11-18).
 16. We Christians are often amazed at the foolish behaviour of unsaved people. We are shocked by their ungodly speech and worldly lifestyle. But we must remember that the devil is an expert at deceiving sinners.
 17. Revelation 12:9 says, he "deceiveth the whole world."
 18. First Timothy 4:1 refers to demons as "seducing spirits."

19. Satan and his unclean spirits have been deceiving people for 6,000 years!
They have a lot of experience.

III. DEMONS RECOGNIZE JESUS

1. The demons recognize our Lord's authority (Mark 1:27; cf. vs. 22).
2. The demons knew the scribes had no real authority (1:22).
3. You may recall that in Acts 19:15, the evil spirit said to the vagabond Jewish exorcists, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?" (Acts 19:15).
4. Oftentimes I will tell some sinner he needs to get saved and he will respond by saying, "I believe in God!" But the Bible says, "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble" (James 2:19).
5. Just saying you believe in God will not get you into heaven. You need to be born again.
6. People get very confused about the occult and voodoo because these demon-inspired people often acknowledge Jesus. But we need to remember that in the Bible, demons recognized Jesus.
7. Furthermore, according to II Corinthians 11:4 there is "another Jesus...another spirit...(and) another gospel."
8. This demon addressed Jesus as "the Holy One of God" (Mark 1:24). But Jesus did not desire a testimony from devils, and so He rebuked him (1:25). You will recall that Paul did the very same thing in Acts 16:18.
9. Jesus rebuked the devil and so should we (Mark 1:25). I was talking one time to a preacher who told me he had a friend who had a son with a rebellious spirit. This preacher suspected it was a demonic spirit that was causing this boy to rebel against his godly parents, and so he advised the parents to rebuke the devil. They did and within a week the boy made a remarkable change for the better, and now he is living for God.

CONCLUSION:

1. Before we conclude this message on demons, I would like for you to please turn to Matthew 17:14-21.
2. When we consider the fierceness of Satan and his demons, we must recognize that our only hope is to do things God's way. And that means doing things according to God's Word.
3. Luke's account is slightly different than Mark's. Luke 4:32 says, "And they were astonished at his doctrine: for His word was with power."
4. God's Word is powerful. Hebrews 4:12 says, "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing

asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

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