

Mark 1:21-28 (NIV)

21 They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. 22 The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. 23 Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit cried out, 24 “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!” 25 “Be quiet!” said Jesus sternly. “Come out of him!” 26 The evil spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek. 27 The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, “What is this? A new teaching--and with authority! He even gives orders to evil spirits and they obey him.” 28 News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee.

41-01-02-Back to the Future II

Kingdom of God, spiritual warfare, demons, deliverance

Mark 1:21-28

The arrival of God’s future reign begins a spiritual confrontation.

INTRODUCTION: (text as Scripture reading)

–*Review:* When Jesus arrived, God’s future Kingdom arrived; today’s Christians **need to get back to the future!** [In ***Back to the Future II***, an old guy named Biff steals the time machine in the future, gives a book of *sports records* to himself in the past, so he can get rich by winning bets at sports. Biff’s corrupting influence fills Marty McFly’s present-day society with *decadence* and *lawlessness*. Marty must return to the past, take the book away from Biff, and undo the *damage*, so he can get back to the future.]

–That’s fiction; our story is real: our world really fell into corruption under Satan’s influence. Our **text** in Mark shows that Christ’s arrival brought a spiritual confrontation between *light* and *darkness*. What happened when the future Kingdom’s King showed up? There was...

- I. A Confrontation Through the Word– v.21-22, ...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 the teachers of the law.**
- A. “Jesus...began to teach” where? In the *synagogue*, a meeting place of *believers*, where we should expect to hear God’s Word. (Do we?)
 - B. He “began to teach” what? One message, one burden, one theme: *the Kingdom of God– Mark1:15 (ESV)*, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.”
 - C. “The people were amazed at his teaching”
 1. Why? He “had authority” like that of an OT prophet, but with a big difference: He was *Prophet, Priest and King!*
 2. “The people” were used to “teachers of the law” who accommodated God’s Word to their own understanding– Mat 15:8-9, These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.”

TRANS: Jesus brought deliverance that begins by a *change of mind*– John 8:34, “I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin.” *Repentance* makes Satan tremble. It removes his control over us. *Sin-bound slaves* get set free when light meets darkness. The *future King’s arrival* was...

II. A Confrontation with Spiritual Bondage— v.23, *Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit cried out,*

- A. This may **surprise us**: demons can follow religious people to church: “a man in their synagogue...possessed by an evil spirit”... *How so?*
1. In Scripture there are levels of being “demonized” [Gk. word covers a broad category, less sensational than the concept “possessed”]
 - a. There can be physical harassment—(“allowed” ground)— 2 Cor 12:7, To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. (God *allowed* Paul to experience this....)
 - b. There may be an internal attachment (legal ground; such as past sins)— John 14:30 (NKJV), “I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me.” [NIV, “has no hold on me”]— The remedy is personal and corporate confession!
 - c. Or there can actually be a personal invasion (spiritual ground; the spirit, soul and body under partial demonic control.)
 2. God’s people (called to be “fishers of men”) are special targets of Satan (even in church, or maybe especially in church).
 3. Hurting people, who may be suffering from demonic torment [evil voices, frightening visions, addictive vices], may come to a house of worship seeking God’s help (which means our help!)
- B. **But demons also got a surprise**— v.24, “*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!*” (What surprised them? The future King’s presence!)
1. They recognized Jesus, and were alarmed (If we move in the power of the future Kingdom, they will recognize us! [Dr. Ken Olson (*Exorcism: Fact or Fiction*) gained a reputation among spirits.]
 2. Their shock? The future had arrived earlier than expected — Mat 8:29, “What do you want with us, Son of God?... Have you come here to torture us before the appointed time?” (They knew OT prophecy! But they didn’t know the mystery of its NT fulfillment!)
 3. Jesus gave them a double-barrel send-off— v.25, “*Be quiet!*” said Jesus sternly. “*Come out of him!*”
 - a. He stopped the demon’s words: “*Be quiet!*” [Martin Luther used to tell the devil, “*Shut up!*”; here the Gk word is “*Muzzle it!*”] (We stop Satan’s voice by boldly using our voice in the King’s name!)
 - b. He stopped the demon’s works, “*Come out of him!*”— 1 Jn 3:8b, The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work. (Christ’s arrival began a future in which Satan loses his ground.)

4. The demon obeyed, but did so “*violently*”— v.26, *The evil spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek.* — This revealed...*
 - a. *the viciousness of the demonic (No ‘friendly, little demons’!)
 - b. *the danger of opening ground up for demonization (through occult involvements, substance abuse, habitual sin)
 - c. *the reality of spiritual war (Satan leaves only with a fight.)

TRANS: What a disgusting scene in the middle of a worship service! The demon’s entrance probably wasn’t as ugly as its exit. The deceiver never reveals up front the full price we pay for his merchandise. James Russell Lowell wrote, “At the devil’s booth are all things sold, / Each ounce of dross costs its ounce of gold; / For a cap and bells our lives we pay, / Bubbles we buy with a whole soul’s tasking: / ‘Tis heaven alone that is given away, / ‘Tis only God may be had for the asking.” The arrival of the King begins a confrontation against temporal grime and gloom by ultimate grace and glory!

III. **Confrontation with the Status Quo**— v.27, *The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, “What is this? A new teaching—and with authority! He even gives orders to evil spirits and they obey him.”*

- A. “*What is this?*” (Synagogue-goers were seeing something new!)
- B. The future has arrived! God’s Kingdom has begun!
1. It was “*A new teaching*” (They weren’t just hearing it but seeing it!)
 2. “*with authority!*” (Not just a position held; it was power at work!)
 3. They watched the “*evil spirits...obey him*” (The hope now wasn’t just to cope with the darkness, but to have it cast out of their lives!)

CONCLUSION: The resultant victory of Christ in setting people free is Christianity’s best advertisement— v.28, *News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee. The arrival of God’s future reign begins a spiritual confrontation. Jesus is Lord!* He is the King victorious, and Christians can boldly sing with Martin Luther: “And though this world with devils filled, / Should threaten to undo us, / We will not fear, for God hath willed / His truth to triumph through us: / The Prince of Darkness grim, / We tremble not for him; / His rage we can endure, / For lo, his doom is sure; / One little word shall fell him.” *What is that word?* It’s “**Jesus,**” the eternal King Who brought His future Kingdom into our present world! *Christians, we need to get back to the future!*