Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Jesus' Authority over Demons, Part 3
Scripture: Luke 4:31-37
Code: 42-58

Let's open our Bibles to the fourth chapter of Luke's gospel as we continue to follow the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ in the account inspired by God through the writer Luke. We find ourselves in chapter 4 of Luke and an occasion recorded in verses 31 to 37 where Jesus cast a demon out of a man in a synagogue in Capernaum. Let me read the text.

Verse 31 of Luke 4, "He came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and He was teaching there on the Sabbath. They were amazed at His teaching, for His message was with authority. There was a man in the synagogue possessed by the spirit of an unclean demon and he cried out with a loud voice, 'Ha, what do we have to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are, the Holy One of God.' And Jesus rebuked him saying, 'Be quiet and come out of him.' And when the demon had thrown him down in their midst, he came out of him without doing him any harm. And amazement came upon them all and they began discussing with one another saying, 'What is this message? For with authority and power he commands the unclean spirits and they come out.' And the report about Him was getting out into every locality in the surrounding district."

As we learn from the Bible, there is a wicked force of evil spirits in the world called demons. Originally they were created by God has holy angels. Their home was heaven and they served and worshiped God. But through pride and rebellion they became evil. Their leader, Lucifer, came known as Satan the devil, he was able to lead one third of those holy angels in his prideful rebellion. As a result of their rebellion and pride, they were cast out of heaven by God Himself. They number in the millions, they are eternal. Created by God originally they will live forever. In the future, they will be thrown into a lake of fire where they will be tormented forever, they cannot be redeemed, they cannot be forgiven, nor will they or can they repent. They are forever wicked.

They operate in the world today to achieve the purpose of Satan and thwart the purposes of God. They are behind the world's complex system of evil and they are the dominating powers in the lives of all people who do not belong to God through faith in Jesus Christ. The whole of humanity is in the grip of this force of evil spirits. They are real, they are personal and they are wicked.

Everybody who is not a Christian belongs to them in the sense of functioning under their dominating power. John 8:44 says, "All the unconverted are the children of the devil." First John 5:19 says, "The whole world of humanity lies in the lap of the evil one." Ephesians 2 says they are all children of wrath, they are all under the influence of the spirit of disobedience who works in them. Second

Corinthians 4 says, "The god of this world has blinded their minds so they cannot understand the gospel."

You look at the world and you see its evil when you see the depth and height and length and breadth of the evil in the world, you are seeing the result not only of human depravity which produces its own evil, but the compounded result of a complex system of wickedness being purveyed by millions of supernatural demons. They use people to effect their God-intended purposes. They would like to stop God's purpose of redeeming sinners and they would like to hold all sinners for themselves who are already in their kingdom. All the unconverted, according to Colossians 1, are already in the kingdom of darkness. And they would like to make that permanent. They do all kinds of things to work their way in the world.

Back in Genesis chapter 6 we find the first occasion of demons manifest. They were working before that, Satan and his forces, but we see them manifest in Genesis chapter 6 because it says in the first few verses that the sons of God, which is a term to describe these demons when they were originally created as angels, they can be called sons of God, angels are so called in Scripture, sons not in the sense of being born like people are born, but sons in the sense of being created by God, these sons of God in the case of Genesis 6 who are now fallen demons cohabitated with the daughters of men. That is to say, demons entered male bodies prior to the Flood, cohabitated with women for the specific purpose of producing what I suppose they felt would be a supremely wicked offspring. A bizarre kind of activity they engaged in.

It is also discussed in Jude 6 which comments on Genesis 6, and 2 Peter chapter 2 where it says angels left their normal habitation and came down and went after strange flesh, that is demons possessing male bodies cohabitating with women to produce what they assumed would be particularly wicked offspring. Demons then indwelt bodies of men in Genesis 6 for specific purpose, that's the first thing that's anything like demon possession. It's not...it's not the full range of demon possession which seems to be a sort of permanent indwelling for the purpose of control and torment, but it does indicate in Genesis 6 that demons can move into people and accomplish their bizarre intentions.

Such demon indwelling is not manifest anyplace in the Old Testament, with the exception of that one point in Genesis 6. We never see demon possession in the rest of the Old Testament. It isn't to say that demons don't move into people, they do but they prefer to be hidden there. After all, the New Testament tells us in 2 Corinthians that they are disguised as angels of light. They would rather operate in a clandestine subtle way. They don't really want to surface themselves if they don't have to. That way they can carry on the ruse, the deception. They can carry on the disguise. They are disguised as angels of light. They are disguised as ministers of righteousness. They don't want to manifest who they really are. And so you can go through your whole lifetime and never see a demon manifestation through a person. As I told you, in my whole lifetime and I've been pretty much at the

cutting edge, at the front edge of the battle for the gospel, I've only perhaps three times actually engaged in verbalization with a demon speaking through a person. They don't like to do that. They don't like to manifest themselves. So demon...demon manifestation in a possessed person is a very rare phenomena. But it wasn't rare during the time of Jesus. Jesus was so powerful, His message was so powerful, His person was so powerful that when He came into the world and He began to preach the gospel and He began to come to people with the message of His Kingdom, demons in sheer terror began to expose themselves, I believe, involuntarily out of sheer trauma.

Usually they don't do that. They would rather operate in a person who is teaching in a liberal seminary. They would rather be a Methodist...they would be in a Methodist pastor who advocates homosexuality. They can get a lot more done subtly. It appears to be high church, it appears to be sophisticated, it appears to be even elitist in terms of its academics. But these people who are the quote/unquote human instruments of these disguised demons sound the same as Satan. If you listen to them, these liberal people, they tell you you can't believe the Bible. Isn't that what Satan said in the Garden, you can't believe God, He's not trustworthy? They tell you the God of the Bible is not good. Isn't that what Satan implied? God isn't good, if He was good He wouldn't tell you you couldn't eat of that good tree over there. You can't trust God. You can't believe God. God isn't going to look out for your best.

See, Satan from the very beginning did one particular thing, and that is to undermine the character of God and then along with that undermine the Word of God. And when anybody comes along today and undermines the nature of God and undermines the Word of God, you can be sure they're plying the trade of the kingdom of darkness. Whether they are actually indwelt by demons or not, we can't know unless there would be some point at which that manifestation occurred. But it's not usual that they would manifest themselves. I suppose that's a. maybe a commentary on the weakness of human preachers, but when Jesus preached, they couldn't keep themselves hidden because in their sheer panic they gave themselves away.

Looking at this text we find the first miracle that Luke records. Not the first miracle Jesus did, it's not the first miracle that He did in Capernaum. He was there at another occasion earlier before He went to Nazareth and began His Galilean ministry. This is maybe His second visit there in His ministry. But it is the first miracle that Luke records and it is a miracle of casting a demon out of a man. And the point of it is to demonstrate that Jesus has power over the kingdom of darkness. Remember, Jesus is God and He threw Satan out of heaven. He can certainly throw a demon out of a man. That needs to be demonstrated, doesn't it?, if we're going to believe Jesus is the Messiah. If we're going to believe that He can deliver us from the kingdom of darkness, if He can deliver us from sin and death and Satan and hell, then we have to see that He can get us and take us out of the kingdom of darkness. In other words, if Jesus is the Messiah, He has to be able to plunder the kingdom of Satan. In Jesus' own words, He has to be able to go into the strong man's house, tie the strong man up, take all his goods and that's exactly what Jesus did. He went into the strong man's, Satan's, house and

He tied Satan up and plundered his goods. And what are his goods? The souls of sinners that he held captive. Jesus can do it. He proves that He can do it because He has total power over the demons. And Luke starts His miracles, the first of the miracles that he'll record here, with this miraculous demonstration of Jesus' power over the kingdom of darkness.

Now Jesus came, according to 1 John 3:8, it says, "The Son of God was manifest, or appeared, that He might destroy the works of the devil." That's why He came. He came to destroy the works of the devil. And one of the works of the devil is to hold men captive to false systems, to wickedness. And Jesus, if He was the Messiah and Savior of sinners, had to demonstrate that He could overpower Satan and overpower demons. And He did it repeatedly, repeatedly, repeatedly. And He did it in public view and He did it, I think the demons...the word must have been getting out to the demons....You know, guys, you've got to be careful here. But the demons would have wanted to stay clandestine. I mean, they would have wanted to stay in the synagogues in the people they were in and influence through false teaching and lies, deceptions, division. They didn't necessarily want to be manifest, but under the preaching of Jesus, they couldn't keep their clandestine identity, they just in sheer panic screamed when they were confronted with Jesus.

That's exactly what you see in verse 33. Here's a demon living in this man and the demon screams in the middle of the teaching of Jesus. As Jesus is going through the gospel, as He is identifying Himself in Capernaum, probably as He did in Nazareth as the Messiah, the Anointed One whom the Spirit has sent to preach the good news to the poor, the gospel, to preach liberty to the captives, to preach sight to the blind and freedom to those who are oppressed. He's preaching this, He's announcing Himself as the Messiah, He's going through all of this. In the middle of this gospel presentation under the most powerful preacher who ever opened His mouth on the face of the earth, the demon can't constrain himself and he screams in sheer terror.

And what we've been saying all along, and I say it again today, what we're going to learn in the New Testament is not that we need to be afraid of demons, but the demons are afraid of us. We've titled this little series, "What makes demons afraid?" As a believer, you shouldn't be afraid of demons, they're afraid of you. They were really terrified by Jesus. James 2:19 is our key little verse here, "The demons believe and...what?...tremble." They live in constant terror. They live in constant terror. It's so silly for people to be told who are Christians that they need to be afraid of demons. You don't need to be afraid of demons, demons are afraid of you. This is what I said last week, you know, there's so little said about the doctrine of deliverance. We talk about the issue of salvation and we go through a long list of justification, sanctification, regeneration, redemption, adoption, all those great words. Where is deliverance in there? That just seems to be the lost component of salvation but when you were saved you were delivered out of that kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. I'm going to talk about that tonight a little more. You have nothing to fear from demons, they have everything to fear from you. And they certainly had everything to fear from Jesus.

Four things made the demons tremble. Number one was the preaching of the Son of God. Jesus stands up and reads the Scripture, typically in a synagogue, then sits down to speak. Verse 31 says it happened to be in Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and He was doing just that on the Sabbath. And His teaching, as always, was absolutely astonishing, it was absolutely astounding because nobody ever had the mind that even came close to His mind, nobody ever knew truth the way He knew truth and nobody ever understood man the way He understood man, nobody ever understood the Scripture the way He understood the Scripture. Nobody ever had greater facility with, nobody ever had a greater grasp of communication skills than Jesus and it was literally astonishing to hear Him speak. And in the middle of His teaching on the gospel, a man sitting there possessed by a demon and out of that voice of that man, a demon screams.

Why is the demon screaming? Because he's been hearing the gospel. What is the gospel? The gospel is what comes in, binds up the strong man and plunders his kingdom. This gospel is going into the hearts of people that belong to the kingdom of darkness and they don't like that to happen. Listen, understand this, Satan and the demons hate God. They hate God as much as they can possibly hate God because they're evil is unmixed with any taint of good. Do you understand that? There's nothing in a demon that is in any sense good. And so everything is unlimited evil. They have an unlimited hatred of God. That is to say it is limited in the sense that their capacity would be limited, but it is not limited in any sense by any tinge of goodness. They hate God. They hate that God would redeem a soul. They hate that. Why? Because redeemed souls give glory to God, right? And they hate that God would be glorified. And the last thing they want is...is their kingdom to be plundered and souls of sinners to be redeemed.

So the demons realizing that the gospel preaching of Jesus is announcing that salvation has come and the kingdom of Satan will indeed be plundered, and so the demon screams, "What do we have to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth?" And I told you, that's idiomatic, that's a way of saying, "Why are You trying to hurt us? Why are You attacking us?" The attack was the gospel because the gospel in the terms of 2 Corinthians 10 smashed the fortresses that these demons had built for their prisoners and the gospel smashed the fortresses, went in and rescued the sinners and led them captive to Christ. So this demon screams under the preaching. Preaching the gospel terrifies demons.

I need to add a footnote here. Please get this in your mind. There are people who believe that Christians can have demons living in them. I don't believe that. And it's been a popular belief. You can go back to a book by Fred Dickason, he writes, "A genuine Christian may become possessed, at least to some degree, even to the point where they speak with strange voices or in foreign languages." He further says, "Demonization is always presented in the Bible as a spirit's inhabiting a human."

So what he is saying is that believers can be inhabited by demons. Christians, he says, can be demonized. Later he says, "The first and most basic result of deliverance of the demonized is the removal of the wicked spirits that are inhabiting the person." So repeatedly he says that demons can inhabit Christians.

But in the book he says, "You can't look to the Bible for support of this." Well, I don't know about you but that leaves me a little cold with the conclusion. Another book in 1977, What Demons Can Do To Saints, Merill Unger, Moody Press book, says, "Only as a believer fails to walk by faith does he fall into sin, which if it is not confessed and curbed may ultimately result in the forfeiture of the Spirit's power to shield him from demonic invasion." So what Unger said was...you're just going on in your Christian life, you fall into sin and all of a sudden you can get invaded by demons. Really? The Holy Spirit is not going to protect you anymore and you can be invaded by demons.

Now these are pretty typical. I'm going back a ways because I know there are modern kind of deliverance movements, Neil Anderson and all those kinds of things and it's just everywhere today. But it kind of has its roots in that kind of thinking, and again, they have to admit that it's not in the Bible. I think it's a failure to understand the doctrine of deliverance again which I'll address a little bit tonight.

When Jesus came, He delivered people from demons. And there's no clear example in the Bible where a demon ever inhabited or invaded a true believer. I mean, Satan can work on the minds of people, there's question about Ananias and Sapphira when Satan placed in their heart a lie to the Holy Spirit. Were they real believers? Were they not? We can't be certain about that. What was the nature of that? Was it demon possession as such? It doesn't seem to be, it doesn't manifest the characteristics of that, but they could have been believers influenced by Satan. We don't see in the New Testament epistles any place where a demon has inhabited literally indwelt, controlled and tormented, which is the three characteristics of demon possession, a believer. Further, never in the New Testament epistles are believers warned about the possibility of being inhabited by demons. No verse that says, "Watch out, if you mess up the door can be kicked open and you're going to get invaded by demons who are going to set up residence." Never in the New Testament do we see anybody rebuking demons, binding demons or casting demons out of a true believer.

Furthermore, the epistles of the New Testament never instruct believers to cast out demons out of anybody, believers or unbelievers. Christ and the apostles were the only ones who cast out demons, the 70 and the apostles, and in every case the demon-possessed people were unbelievers. And it never says that the demon-possessed people even believed, or even repented. They did it, Jesus, the apostles, the 70, to show that the Kingdom of God had come. Jesus says that, I think it's the eleventh chapter of Luke, He says, "Look, if I'm casting out demons, the Kingdom of God is here." It was God who threw them out of heaven to start with and if you see Me throwing them out again, you know it's God again.

Demons can't come and live in a Christian. Second Corinthians 6 verses 15 and 16, "What harmony has Christ with Satan? What has a believer in common with an unbeliever? What agreement has the temple of God with idols, for we are the temple of the living God." How clear is that? Just as God said, "I will dwell in them and walk in them, I will be their God and they shall be My people." That's pretty definitive stuff, isn't it? So you don't need to go around fearing demons. So tragic that people make Christians afraid of demons when the fact is demons are afraid of them.

Colossians 1:13 says, "God delivered us from the domain of darkness and took us right out of there and transferred us into the Kingdom of His beloved Son." That's why we are more than conquerors in Christ. That's why we always triumphant in Christ Jesus. That's why 1 John 2:13 says, "We have overcome the wicked one." And 1 John 4:4, "Greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world." Where is Satan and his demons? They're in the world. Who's in us? God.

Demons can take up residence in non-believers and they did that in an escalating fashion during the time of Christ, at least they manifested it in an escalated fashion. As I said, they like to stay hidden but under the confrontation of Jesus, they just literally blew their cover. They were just traumatized. And as I said last time, the victims of demon possession are not necessarily the most evil people, sometimes children were possessed, as we shall see in the New Testament. And they're not to be confused with people who somehow aren't functioning normally, mentally, because every time Jesus confronted a demon, the conversation was always comprehensible and rational cause you're dealing with a rational being in dealing with a demon. Somebody who is completely spaced out, flipped out, incomprehensible, talking double talk, nonsense is...you're probably not engaging a demon.

The point of the text is that Jesus meets this demon-possessed situation and totally dominates the demon. The demon panics under the preaching of the gospel because the gospel raids the kingdom. The gospel steals the man that he's living in and plying his wicked influences and so the demon panics under the preaching.

Let me tell you something. People run around, "I cast you out, I bind you," that doesn't do a thing to any demon anywhere, anytime. If they laugh, they laugh at that...exorcisms, human manipulations, like Acts, you know, the sons of Sceva going around...they were Jewish exorcists, you know, they had these little incantations, chants and formulas and the demon said, "Jesus we know, and Paul we know, but who are you? We're not impressed." Basically. They shudder not under human manipulation, they shudder under the power of the gospel because the gospel goes into the kingdom and raids it. The gospel goes into the house, ties up the strong man and plunders his goods. That's what smashes their fortresses. I said, that's...that's what frees the souls of their captives and brings them to Christ.

So the first thing is the preaching of the Son of God. The second thing that frightens demons is the purpose of the Son of God. Let's go to that. We spent two weeks on the first point, we'll spend today and the last three. Two, the purpose of the Son of God, go down to verse 34 again and we've talked about the first part of the verse. "But the demon says to Him, 'Have You come to destroy us?. Have You come to destroy us?'" This is the purpose of God, right? First John 3:8, "For the Son of God was manifest that He might destroy the works of the devil." So they know that. They know the plan. They know the way they're going to go. They know God in the end is going to be triumphant. They know that God is going to judge them. He's already thrown them out of heaven. They've already been sentenced to eternal wickedness and eternal punishment on top of their wickedness. "Have You come to destroy us?" The demon doesn't quite know the chronology, not even the Son of God knows the full layout of the timing of God, so the demon says, "Is this the time?" Here's one demon speaking on behalf of the demons in general, using plural pronouns, "Have You come to destroy us? What have we to do with you? Is this it? Is this the last? Is this the last part of our operation? Is this it? Is this the end? Have You come to destroy, luo?" The Greek verb means "to undo." It means "to dissolve." It means "to disconnect something that holds together." It means "to destroy." Something disintegrates...have You come to literally destroy us? To destroy not only the works but us, the works, erga, the enterprise, that's 1 John 3:8. Erga means action, undertaking enterprise collectively. Have You come not only to destroy the satanic enterprise but all the demons as well?

Well why would he ask that? Because that's exactly what he expected. The coming of the Messiah was to include the total end to the demonic activity. And then all the demons would be thrown into the lake of fire.

They live in fear of that. They know that that's the plan. You say, "Well, if they know that's the plan, why do they work so hard?" Because they...for several reasons. Number one, they...they hold out a little bit of hope that maybe they can thwart the plan. They're desperate. Furthermore, they're wicked by nature, that's all they are is wicked so all they can do is what is wicked. And they do it with passion and they are tireless cause they are spiritual beings. They don't sleep. They don't get weary. They don't take a day off. They ply their vicious wickedness at all times.

In Luke 8, again they know the purpose, Luke 8, look at verse 27. Again Jesus goes up into the Gentile area in Galilee to the area called Gerasa, or Gadara. And He comes out into the land. Verse 27, He is meeting a man there from the city possessed with demons. This man has more than one. And he hadn't put on any clothing for a long time. Now remember what I told you it wasn't that the guy had some...he wasn't a streaker, he didn't find some bizarre pleasure running around like this. He was being tormented. He didn't put any clothes on because the demon was indwelling him, controlling him and he couldn't resist it and this was the torment. So he was literally thrown out of society. He had been like this for a long time. He didn't live in a house. He had to live in the tombs. He was so socially outcast that he had to live in a cemetery and he sees Jesus...and he...the demon goes into total panic, the demon's inside the man. Screaming again in loud voice, "What do I to do

with You?" Same thing, "Why are You here to harm us? Why are You here to hurt us? Jesus, Son of the Most High God, I beg You, do not torment me." The demon feels the purpose of Christ, maybe this is the time He's come and now I'm going to go to torment.

Please...verse 31...the demons are asking..."Please, please don't send us to the pit. Don't send us down there. We're enjoying a measure of freedom in our wickedness, don't send us down where we're going to be bound, don't send us to the pit." They know that Jesus is going to send them to the pit. You say, "How do they know He's going to send them to the pit?" Because that's the plan.

Let me show you the plan. Turn to Revelation 20. By the way, demons are also premillennialists. They're not amillennialists, they premillennialists because they know the plan is for Jesus to return, Jesus to come to earth, set up His earthly Kingdom and during the earthly Kingdom they're going to the pit. Revelation 20, "An angel coming down from heaven has the key to the abyss," same word, key to the pit. Remember now, chapter 19, Jesus is coming, this is after the time of Tribulation. You have the Rapture of the church, the church is carried into heaven. Then for seven years you have a time of Tribulation on the earth. During that time all hell breaks loose. Demons work in an unrestrained fashion. God takes off the restraint and demons just run across the world and Revelation 6 to 19 describes what happens in the horrors of all of that goes on. And then at the end of that seven-year period Jesus comes back. He destroys all the ungodly, sets up His Kingdom. Now in setting up His Kingdom what He does, chapter 20 verse 1, He sends an angel, has the key to the abyss and a great chain in his hand. He takes hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, the devil and Satan and implied here is all the rest of the demons and they're bound for a thousand years. They know when Jesus comes back He's going to put them in the pit. So this demon in the Gerasa countryside sees Jesus, realizes who it is and says, "Is this the time to go to the pit? Is this it? Is this...is this the time You're going to come to earth and actually set up Your Kingdom?"

Verse 3 of Revelation 20, "He threw them in the abyss, shut it up and sealed it and they're not allowed to come out for a thousand years." Down in verse 10, "After the thousand years is over they are thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone to be tormented day and night forever and ever."

I've heard people say that all the hell there ever is is that you're just going to be wicked forever. If you're wicked, you're just going to be wicked forever and that's what hell is. No, that's not what hell is. They're already wicked forever. They are wicked forever but they fear the lake of fire because the lake of fire isn't just being the same as they already are, the lake of fire is being tormented and punished forever for being wicked forever. Don't...we don't want to go to the pit, so the demon in Gerasa...is this the time? Is this the time? Are we going to the pit? Are we...they know what's going on. There will be eternal punishment with no relief forever. And they won't be operating their system, they will be kept in a lake of fire. They tremble at the thought.

So they tremble at the preaching of the gospel because it plunders their kingdom. They tremble at the purpose of the Son of God because it spells their eternal damnation. And that's why they fought. In Matthew 11:12 it says, "The Kingdom of God suffers violence." And, you know, that has a lot of implications but one of the areas of violence that the Kingdom of God suffers, here comes the King, Jesus, and He comes offering the Kingdom and there's this violent assault on the Kingdom. You can say, "Well that was the hostility of the Jews." Well that's true, but behind that hostility was the hostility of hell itself, wasn't it? Part of the violence was the battle engaged between Christ and Satan and his demon force. And often, if you study the accounts of demon possession in the gospels, you find the demons were very violent with their victims. Extraordinary number of demonized people appear during the ministry of Jesus indicating that they were literally moving into people as fast as they could, probably, to hold on to people. Remember there are millions such demons. It was a feverish time of activity as the kingdom of darkness tried to hold on to its prisoners. Jesus demonstrated that He could just shatter those powers and go right into the house of the strong man, Matthew 11:12, and plunder his goods.

So the demon was terrified by the preaching of the Son of God and He was terrified by the purpose of the Son of God because the purpose ultimately, 1 John 3:8, is to destroy not only the works of the devil, but to destroy the agents of the devil in eternal hell. And so the demons says, "Is this time have You come to destroy us?" Not in the sense of annihilation but in the sense of the destruction of their enterprise and eternal punishment in the lake of fire which burns forever and ever.

There's a third thing that terrifies demons, not only the preaching of the Son of God and the purpose of the Son of God, but the person of the Son of God. I think you can understand that. Verse 34, we have a lot of insight into this whole situation just in this one verse, "The demon says, 'I know who You are, the Holy One of God.'"

Why does he pick the word "holy"? What is most frightening to one who is most wicked? Someone who is most holy. Now the people who searched for the real Jesus on ABC don't know who Jesus is, the demons do. They know who He is. The demon says, "I know who You are, the Holy One of God." Wow! I don't think that demon...I don't think that demon sort of premeditated that, I think that was terror. And I think it was the sheer terror of one who is ultimately wicked in the presence of One who is ultimately perfect. Ultimate evil cringes in the presence of perfect holiness. "I know who You are."

Look at verse 41 of chapter 4. "The demons were coming out of many, crying out and saying, 'You are the Son of God,' and rebuking them He would not allow them to speak because they knew Him to be the Christ." Isn't that an interesting response?

You say, "Wait a minute, wait a minute, this could be some...this could be amazing publicity." Jesus who casts out... demons says, "You're the Son of God, You're the Christ, You're the Son of the Most

High God," as the demon says in Luke 8:28. Jesus shut them up. He silenced them. Why? Listen, the last source of promotion Jesus wants is demons because, as I told you, people knew demon manifestation when they saw it, and if hell is pronouncing this man the Messiah, that doesn't help because Satan is the father of...lies. Jesus says, "Shut up, silence." There was this demon-possessed girl in Acts 16, she was saying about Paul, "These men are the servants of the Most High God." Paul says, "Stop, get out." God doesn't need publicity from the kingdom of darkness, that confuses the issue.

But the demon couldn't restrain himself. We know who You are. They know who He is. There is a sort of a back-handed reality here, isn't there? For those of us who are Christians we can see. This is tremendous insight into the nature of Christ, but for a group of unbelievers who hear the demons saying, "This is your Messiah," they're going to see that as a lie. Jesus didn't want that from them. Mark 1:34, "He healed many who were ill with various diseases and cast out many demons and He was not permitting the demons to speak because they knew who He was." They always know who He is.

Isn't it...isn't it amazing? I said this a couple of weeks ago, isn't it amazing to you that theological liberals and pseudo-scholars don't know who Jesus is but demons do? You say, "Well then if these guys are under the power of demons why don't the demons tell them?" Because it blows their cover. They can't have liberal theologians going around saying Jesus is the Messiah, Jesus is the Holy One of God, that's the truth. So demons can put the truth in the mouth of liars as part of their deception. And Jesus won't allow them to speak the truth on His behalf because that in itself would appear to some to be a deception...subtleties. Jesus wanted no testimony from demons which could fuel the idea that He was from Satan because, remember Matthew 12, when the Jewish leaders made a conclusion they said, "He works by the power of...whom?...Satan." That's what they accused Jesus of. Maybe they went back to the fact that the demons were affirming Jesus so He has to be from the kingdom of demons. Well the demons knew who He was and as I said, sheer evil is terrified in the presence of sheer holiness.

Now let me just bring this down to where we are. Where does Jesus dwell today? I know He sits at the right hand of the Father but what about you, where does He dwell? You know the answer to the question? Galatians 2:20, "I'm crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ lives in me." Think that terrifies the demons? Is your body the temple of God? Yes, it's not the temple of idols, it's not the temple of demons, it's the temple of Christ, what do you have to be afraid of? Demons are afraid of you. You bring into their realm the presence of Christ. You bring into their realm the remembrance of the purposes of Christ. You bring into their realm the preaching of the gospel of Christ which raids their kingdom. Everything about you having been delivered from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of God's dear Son causes you to make demons fear. When you show up, they cringe because when you show up Jesus shows up. "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit," 1 Corinthians 6:17.

I mean, if Isaiah panicked when he saw God, what do you think a demon does? Isaiah was a prophet and he fell on his face in terror when he saw a vision of God. If Ezekiel, in Ezekiel chapter 1, saw God...he went into a coma of fear. The disciples on the transfiguration mount, Matthew 17, saw the glorified Christ and they fell over like dead men. John, Revelation 1, sees a vision of Christ, falls over like a dead man. If...if God's own people panic in the presence of His holiness, what does a wicked, vile demon do in the presence of His holiness? And you are the temple of God, do you understand that? They're terrified because of what we preach, the gospel that raids their kingdom, because of the purpose of God...that's one of the reasons, folks, that we have to get the book of Revelation right and we have to preach the coming of Christ and His glorious Kingdom and the end of all the sources and powers of hell. And thirdly, the demons are frightened by the perfection of the Holy One of God whose presence in the world now is in the church. That title, verse 34, "I know who You are, the Holy One of God," is reminiscent of the angel Gabriel's announcement to Mary back in chapter 1 verse 35, "The angel answered and said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you and for that reason the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God." Mary, you're going to have a holy offspring.

Whenever the demons talked about Christ it seemed that they featured that. Over in Luke 8 the demon says, "What do I have to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God?" I mean, they...they know who He is, that He is in fact the Holy One, God Himself and they are terrified.

And lastly, demons are terrified by the power of the Son of God...the preaching, the purpose, the purity and the power of the Son of God. And the power is displayed, isn't it, here in verse 35. "Jesus rebuked him saying, 'Be quiet and come out of him.'" Would you please notice what isn't here? There's no incantations, there's no manipulations, there's no dialogue, there's no discussion, there's no conversation, there's no prayer, there's no binding, there's no loosing, there's no nothing. Shut up and get out of that man...that's all He does. Immediate domination. It says, "He rebuked him," and some scholars think that epitimason[?] here is a technical term for the subjection of evil spirits. It's used over and over in the New Testament. No discussion, no conversation, no dialogue, no debate, no formula, no exorcism, no prayer, no nothing, absolute power...Be quiet, get out! To put it simply, folks, this is miraculous, this is divine power. Jesus demanded that that demon be silent, He will not accept promotion from demons.

The demon didn't want to come out. The demon was very subtle in plying his deceptions through the man. It's like the demons in Luke 8, "Don't...please don't send us...don't send us out of the country, don't send us to the pit, we like what we've got, we're comfortable, we're doing our thing here, don't..." One day He's going to send them out of the world, one day He's going to send them in the lake of fire, just like He sent Satan right out of heaven when he sinned and all the rest of the demons with him. He has the power to command this demon who can't resist His power and he has to go. He's the creator of the universe and words of power brought everything that exists into its place and those

words of power can take everything that exists out of its place. And here is evidence of that.

Can I tell you something, folks? Please, if you study the demon possessed and miracles of Jesus with regard to them, they're often called "healings." That's right, the word "healing" is used, Matthew 4:24; Matthew 12:22; Mark 3:10; Luke 6:19; Luke 7:21; Luke 8:2; Acts 10:38. That will put it on the tape for you. The casting out of demons was considered a healing and healings were miracles, folks, these are miracles done only by Christ and those that He commissioned and sent out, not anybody else. There is no case anywhere in the scriptures of some exorcism, some incantations, some formula, some prayer, something or other, some binding, some loosing, some chasing of demons. It doesn't exist. When demons were dealt with in unbelievers, they were dealt with with absolute divine and supernatural authority, either Christ's own or that which He delegated to those that were with Him. This is categorically a healing that constitutes a miracle. Now the demon wanted to stay but he couldn't stay because Jesus had the power to throw him out. The demon wanted to stay and torment the man and this is a...this is a bratty demon, like a spoiled kid. Verse 35, "And when the demon had thrown him down in their midst, he came out of him without doing him any harm."

You've seen your kids do that, you know. "Put that down!" "No." "Put that down!" ??? That's the demon...the bratty demon slams the guy down...I'm going but I'm not going without a final act of defiance.

He came out of him, however, verse 35 says, without doing him any harm. This man is not a believer. There's nothing about forgiveness of sins here. There's no discussion of the man. But Jesus is certainly compassionate, isn't He? I mean, the demons...part of the demon possession, as I said, three words, indwelt, controlled, tormented, now this man had been tormented with this demon and here was one final torment, slamming him to the ground in the middle of the synagogue. It reminds me over in chapter 17 of Matthew of the boy who was ill and falling into the fire and falling into the water as the demon slammed him here and slammed him there. Jesus protected the man from any harm, showing His compassion. But the point here is not the man, it never is in dealing with demon possessed people because there's never any discussion about any demon-possessed person in the gospels spiritual life. It's just the demons, it's just showing us that He has power over the demons who hold all men in their kingdom. But Jesus was compassionate and He protected the man from being harmed. Demons want to harm, produce illness, injury. You find in the New Testament things like epilepsy, deafness, dumbness. As I showed you in Matthew 17, falling into the fire, falling into the water, danger of burning and drowning and things like that. But when Jesus cast them out, they went immediately. This was a healing, this was a miracle, this is not an exorcism. Such have no true divine power.

Demons may go. You can get your little group and play your little games and try to chase demons away and they might go by saying, "Yeah, we've been discovered, let's go find somebody that doesn't know we're there. Let's go find somebody in a place that doesn't know we're there. We don't need

them. Now that our cover's blown what's the point? We can't do what we need to do." And they may decide to go but there's no supernatural power in any of us. Furthermore, if we're dealing with Christians, the whole thing is ludicrous because 2 Corinthians 6, as I reminded you a moment ago, we belong to the Lord, we're His, He lives in us.

Well, Jesus has come in and plundered the kingdom of darkness and rescued us and taken us out, smashed the fortress and delivered us into the Kingdom of His dear Son. And that's where we dwell. Now all of this, Jesus dealing with demons, is to demonstrate that He can do that. Can He deliver us from the kingdom of darkness? Can He? Sure. Does He have power over Satan? Sure, He threw him out of heaven. Does He have power over demons? Sure. That means that He can free us. So God the Son...God the Son, the Savior, Messiah manifests to bring the kingdom of salvation. In order to bring that kingdom and the souls of men has to destroy Satan's enterprise and ultimately will send Satan and all the rest of his demons to burn forever in a lake of fire. But when the Son came, Satan didn't take it lying down and struck back and the demons struck back attacking Jesus and the apostles with an assault that was violent and extreme. It was unprecedented, un.... repeated escalation of demonic manifestation as they, I think, unwillingly were manifest just under the power of the presence of Jesus and now today they've kind of gone quietly back into their secret places and they'll escalate their stuff again just before Jesus returns a second time, as we find in the book of Revelation. But Jesus proves to be the Messiah here. Luke gives us this to show that He can deliver us from the kingdom of darkness. He can save sinners.

Now what Jesus did that day had a great impact. Look at verse 36, "Amazement came on them all." Amazement is sort of wonder mixed with fear. "And they began discussing with one another, "What is this logos What is this word? Wow...what...He speaks... for with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits and they come out?" These people were familiar with this. There had been manifestations of demons. They had seen that. And as I said before, they knew it when they saw it but they had never seen anything like this. What is this word? This man speaks and we have never seen anything like this, never...never.

Matthew 9:33 puts it, "Jesus had power over demons such that the Jews said it was never so seen in Israel." Nothing like this had ever been seen in Israel, nothing...never. Jesus' power over demons was supernatural, extraordinary, unmatched, it was miraculous. You don't need to do that, folks. We don't need to know you can cast out demons because we're not looking to you to save us. You get the picture? We don't need to know that you can conquer the kingdom of darkness, that's pointless. You can't conquer it for us. We just need to know that Jesus can conquer the kingdom of darkness, right? We only need how many saviors? Just one and we need the real one. Now if you can do it, guess what? That depreciates what He did. You see that? You can't have people running around..."Well, I'm casting out demons here..." Oh, are you the Messiah, too? How many messiahs do we need? How does that confuse and obliterate the reality of what's going on in the New Testament? And you say, "Oh well, everybody believes a little different." Don't give me that, that's

wrong. Not only wrong, it strikes a blow against the uniqueness of the Son of God and the apostolic ministry that surrounded Him.

They saw...they never saw anything like this. This isn't like anything they've ever experienced. He commands with authority and power, exousia and dunamis, two very strong words. He commands, habitual action. He constantly commands and they do whatever He tells them to do. "And the report about Him," verse 37, "was getting out into every locality and surrounding district." Well, literally into every place of the region round about. Everyone was hearing. This man...this man has power over the kingdom of darkness. This man commands demons and they do exactly what He tells them to do. There are no formulas, no prayers, no nothing, no conversation, gone and they're gone. These were miracles. These were pointing to the authority and power of the King Himself and His Kingdom and they cannot be duplicated, they cannot be equaled.

And for Christians, folks, get the perspective right, you have nothing to fear from demons. They have everything to fear from you. Does that make you feel a little better? Amen. Let's pray.

We reminded ourselves, Lord, often as we've come together to worship of the great words of Martin Luther, "A mighty fortress," that verse that says, "And though this world with devils filled should threaten to undo us, we will not fear for God has 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." And, Lord, we know that in the end You're going to destroy all the demons in the lake of fire. We know that's future but the present is You have shown that same power by destroying them in us, literally freeing us individuals from their clutches bringing us captive to Christ. Every salvation is but a foretaste of that final destruction in the future. We thank You that we have been delivered from the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of Your beloved Son. We praise You in Your Son's name. Amen.

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