



ALL SAINTS
PRESBYTERIAN

SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

FOR ALL SAINTS SMALL GROUPS

“A Question of Authority” | Rev. Greg Grooms. | January, 28, 2018

Mark 1:21-28

²¹And they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath he entered the synagogue and was teaching. ²²And they were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes. ²³And immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, ²⁴“What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God.” ²⁵But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be silent, and come out of him!” ²⁶And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying out with a loud voice, came out of him. ²⁷And they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, “What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.” ²⁸And at once his fame spread everywhere throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee.

Intro Question

Greg introduced his homily saying that we’d be looking at a “provocative and less than heartwarming picture of Christ. Why do we need to think of Jesus in this way?”

Background

In the passage from Mark, it’s not the content of Jesus’ message but his power that is highlighted. The presence of evil at work in the world takes a good thing and corrupts it, wrongly giving authority to something other than God.

However, Jesus came with authority, not just to tell of, but to inaugurate his kingdom: showing what’s to come and showing how in the here and now. Having been untied with Christ, our work is to repair what’s lost and broken by sin, so our work becomes a part of His work and His kingdom.

Further, Greg cited NT Wright, who suggests that the conflicts between Christ and the demons are skirmishes of a larger war. And Jesus knew that to silence the demons –to break the power of sin, evil and death in the world –would mean to give up his power.

Read Mark 1:21-28 aloud.

Discuss:

- 1.) Does resisting Christ’s authority make us free? How might it feel so, even temporarily?
- 2.) What does it mean to fully submit to the power and authority of the gospel?
- 3.) In his concluding prayer, Greg prayed that we would be both open to the way sin enslaves and open to the freedom of grace. How have you see the enslaving power of sin in your life? How is there freedom in grace?
- 4.) Greg described the work of a painter. After his death, the painter saw his painted leaf in the larger whole of a forest’s canopy of leaves. How does it make you feel to know that your life, your creations and work, are a part of a greater reality?

Conclusion/Application

In a beautiful illustration, Greg described a powerful sea of evil, scary and seemingly consuming, and yet Jesus became human to be the bridge over that stormy sea, bringing us from death to life with the power and authority of God the Father. Go, therefore, in peace.

By: Erin Holcomb