

“What Message Is This?”

Luke 4:31-37

Jesus was driven from Nazareth, His hometown, after teaching in their synagogue. In our age of celebrity preachers, it would be wise to remember that Jesus was not well-liked. “He was hated without a cause.” Jesus returned to Capernaum and continued His ministry, including teaching the Jews in the synagogue.

Notice, the synagogue meeting is interrupted by one possessed with a demon (i.e. ‘demoniac’). Jesus heals the man by speaking the words, ‘Be quiet and come out of him!’ Amazement came upon all (v 36). ‘For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits and they come out (v. 36). Or to put it in a modern vernacular with an Oklahoma accent: *“Tain’t nuthin too hard for Him; He’ll get er’ done.”* How would you like to be in a church, or live a life, where you see the impossible occur and miracles happen?

I. The message is always more important than the messenger.

*“They began talking with one another saying, ‘What is this **message**?’ (v. 36). They marvel not at the Messenger, but the *logos* (the word or message) spoken by the messenger which transforms a life.*

(A) It is the message of grace that conveys power and authority.

Some believe the message only refers to the command ‘Be quiet and come out’ (v. 35), but it is clear that Jesus was teaching in the synagogue when the demon interrupted. What was Jesus’ message? *“They were amazed at his teaching, for **his message was with authority**” (v. 32). And, when preaching at Nazareth, they ‘wondered at **the words of grace that fell from His lips**’ (v. 22). Nobody deserves God’s favor, yet God sovereignly chooses to be favorable to sinners *in Christ*.*

(B). It is the methodology of the world to grant a position of power and authority.

One of the ways you know that a church has departed the King’s way, and gone the way of the world is by whether or not the pastor or elder or leader is considered ‘authoritative’ rather than the message that he (or she) brings. Positional power is never the focus of Christ’s kingdom. Jesus said to His disciples, *“You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It is not be this way among you” (Matthew 20:25).*

II. It is the message of grace which will calm the troubled soul.

As the demoniac interrupts the worship service, Jesus simply and calmly says “Be quiet; come out!” The KJV translates it: “Hold thy peace.” Other translations use “Silence!” It literally is *“be muzzled.”* The same Greek word is used in the gospels when Jesus rebukes the storm and brings calm waters. *“And He got up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, “Hush, be muzzled.” And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm” (Mk. 4:39).* When Christ graciously speaks, turmoil goes quiet. Do you need love? Listen to the word of grace. Are you in need of security? Hear the word of grace.

“When we allow temptations to overcome us, Christ sleeps in us. We forget Christ at such times. Let us, then, remember him. Let us awake him. He will speak. He will rebuke the tempest in the soul, and there will be a great calm.” (Augustine)

III. The message of grace carries with it the power and authority of God.

“If God be for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31). Sovereign grace teaches us that just as there were many widows in Israel in Elijah’s day, the prophet was only sent to Zarephath. Just as there were many lepers in Elisha’s day, the prophet was only sent to Naaman the Syrian. So too, there are many sinners in this day and age, but God has chosen you to be rich in His favor in Christ. I say to you that the toughest demonic stronghold in your life can be broken when you begin to understand that when Christ moves, demons flee, and He always moves through the word of grace.

