

Message Transcript

**WHEN TRUTH CONFRONTS | THE KINGDOM BREAKS IN
AARON BROCKETT | JANUARY 31 & FEBRUARY 1, 2026**

Amen and amen and amen. Hey, good to be with you today at all of our locations, feel free to grab a seat and as you do, turn to your neighbor and say, "You look warm and cheerful today."

I know, I know, I just probably asked you to lie through your teeth, but it is a proven fact that when you smile, you just warm up by 10 degrees. I don't know if you knew that, but good to have you guys here once again on another chilly morning. Grateful to have everybody across all of our locations. Those of you online, I want to encourage you, if you're at a physical location, do not leave without grabbing this 21 days of prayer and fasting guide on your way out. We wanted to give these out last week, but due to the weather, we didn't get a chance to meet physically.

And so I want to make sure that everybody gets their hands on these as you leave because 21 days of prayer and fasting begins tomorrow. So what we want to do is take today as a day of preparation for that. For those of you that are online or not able to get to a physical location, you can get all this content on the church app. And I want to encourage you sometime this afternoon or evening just to start flipping through it and to just get yourself ready for the next 21 days of prayer and fasting. Now for some of you, you'd be like, you know, "What is prayer and fasting?"

You need this guide. If you've got those questions, we try to speak to those questions in this guide. Some of you are like, "Why 21 days?" Very simple fact that it takes about 21 days to break a habit and to start a habit. And so for the next 21 days, we are just walking you through every single day.

Day one, there's a prayer, there's a scripture, there's a prompt. And so this will guide you through. The team has done an amazing job with these, so grab it once on your way out. On Tuesday, another episode of our podcast drops and we do a little bit of a deep dive on what prayer and fasting is and why we think it's so important for our church. So check that out.



We talk about that among some other things going on in the world today as we just try to help us know how to think and engage as Christ followers in this crazy world in which we live. Well, if you have a Bible, and I hope you do, go ahead and grab it and find Mark chapter four. We're going to pick it up in verse 21 here in a moment. For those of you that are just maybe joining us for the very first time and this your first week with us, let me just kind of catch you up.

We are in week four of a year long study in the Gospel of Mark. We're just going our way, verse by verse through it and just by way of review, in the first 20 verses of chapter one, we've seen that Jesus is announced as the Messiah for the very first time. In fact, in our passage today, He's going to be announced as such for the second time from an unlikely source. We see in the first 20 verses, Jesus is baptized. He's led out into the wilderness where He contends with Satan through 40 days of prayer and fasting.

And then immediately out of that, if you were here last week, then He calls His very first disciples out of their family fishing business that was very prosperous. And He says, "I want you to drop your nets and follow me, because I have a mission that I want to accomplish through you." That's in the first 20 verses. Now, last week I made this point that in order for Jesus to call these young men to radically change their lives and walk away from a prosperous fishing business, that required Him to have authority to ask that of them. And Jesus' authority is derived from the fact that that he is "capital T- Truth."

Jesus is by very nature, objective Truth. Now, we have a tendency to be a little bit allergic to the concept of objective truth in the world in which we live. We don't like objective truth because that means that something is fixed. We like relative truth. We can be a little bit more squishy, and we can say, "Well, you have your truth and I have my truth."

And that sounds great in the realm of the philosophical. It just doesn't work in the realm of the realistic. Now, anybody who's ever been married, held down a job, or has a mortgage knows that to be true. Man, if you're late on your mortgage payment and you reach out to the bank, you cannot say, "Well, you know, you have your truth and I have my truth." No, man, they're gonna say, "We're gonna take our truth to the repo, man. That's what we're gonna do."

And, you know, oftentimes I would say this... And we're gonna hear this in just a minute, that the Scriptures say that the truth is designed not to ruin your fun. The truth is designed not to shame you or make you feel bad. The truth is designed to set you free, implying that we are in bondage to deceptive ideologies and sin, and we need the loving truth of Jesus Christ to set us free from that. And, guys, honestly, the most loving thing that we can do at times is to be presented with truth.



In my early years here, I had an executive assistant. Her name is Sandy. Sandy has since retired, and she's living her best life in retirement. And for the first few years, man, I was young. I didn't know what I was doing. And honestly, the only thing that's changed is I'm a little bit older and I still don't know what I'm doing. And Sandy, she kind of kept my life on the rails. And I remember, if any of you know Sandy or know about her, then you know that she's a sweetheart of a woman. But she could be very direct and very bold and very blunt. That's what I loved about her because it just made her really good at what she did.

And I'll never forget, one day we're having a meeting in my office, and at the very end of the meeting, she said, "Do I have permission to say something to you?" And I "Said, sure." And she said, "Well, Aaron, I just want you to know that the lack of organization in your office is not an accurate representation of the level of your leadership."

She just threw the smackdown on me, and I didn't even know it hit me. That's another way of saying, "It looks like a tornado rolled through your office. You need to clean it up, you big slob." That's what that meant. And she wasn't wrong.

In fact, it was the most loving thing for her to say. Because truth often confronts and in our passage today, Jesus, "the capital T-truth," what we're gonna see Him do, is He is going to confront some things that are evil in this world and the result of evil, and He is going to cast it out and heal it. So pick it up with me and look at your Bibles. Verse 21 of chapter one. It says this, right after Jesus has called these disciples to follow him. It says:

"Jesus and his companions went to the town of Capernaum." (NLT)

So I just want you to get this picture in your head. Some of you may be visual learners, that Capernaum is located on the northwest side of the Sea of Galilee. And it's actually not far from where Jesus grew up, the town of Nazareth. And it's this very picturesque, prosperous fishing village.

In fact, I was in Israel a few years ago. I got to visit Capernaum. It was my favorite place. Even in all the places that I went in Jerusalem, I loved Capernaum. You need to understand that Capernaum, we're gonna get to this text in a few weeks, is where the four friends tear a hole through the roof to get their paralytic friend to Jesus. That's in Capernaum. I got to visit the ruins of that house. It was so cool.



Peter's house is in Capernaum. And it was actually kind of Jesus' home base for His ministry. It's this beautiful, picturesque little fishing village. Now I wanna point this out, is that Jesus has just called the disciples to change the world with Him.

It's like, "Hey guys, leave your nets, come after me. I'm on mission to radically change the world." Now think about this for a minute. If they're beginning their mission to change the world, where do you think the first place they might go to do that? Maybe Jerusalem? Lot of activity down there. Maybe Rome? That was the center of the known world at the time. But no, instead they choose to go to the little fishing village of Capernaum, which was Peter and Andrew's hometown.

Now think about this for a minute. Peter and Andrew just left their nets, they're ready to go. "Jesus, where are we gonna go, man? Are we gonna go to New York? Are we gonna go to LA?" He's like, "No, we're gonna go to Capernaum."

That would have been a letdown. They're like, "Well, we just came from there."

It'd be like, let's just say that you're from Evansville, Indiana. That's your hometown, that's where you grew up. Given our church, that's probably not a hypothetical for a whole bunch of you. That may be your hometown. And let's just say that Jesus has called you to change the world. And you're like, "Yeah, man, I'm gonna leave my job in Evansville, I'm gonna go with Jesus, and maybe we're gonna go to New York or LA." And He goes, "No, we're gonna go to Evansville."

And the reason why I think it's important enough for us to pull that out of the text is because discipleship starts right where you're at.

See, some of us, like we talked about this last week, some of us are looking for the will of God. "We're like, God, what do you wanna do through me?" And God's like, look down right where you're at. The kingdom of God wants to show up where you wake up. Let's start there.

And then it goes on in verse 21, and it says:

"When the Sabbath day came, He went..." (NLT)

I want you to underline that word, "went." You'll know why in a minute.

"...into the synagogue," (NLT)



Underline that word too.

"...And began to teach." (NLT)

Now, I just want to point this out, that Mark says that Jesus went. He didn't stumble. It says that Jesus meant to go to the synagogue.

He wasn't just kind of like hanging out that day and just happened upon this gathering. No, Jesus prioritized going to the synagogue, which was the church service of their day. And He didn't have to. On mission, He could have just gathered some people at the local Starbucks. He could have gathered up some people on a hillside, He could have talked to some people on the street. And He did all those things. But He also went out of His way in addition, to go to the gathering, which is what the word synagogue means.

The Greek transliteration of synagogue means "to gather together." It's where the Jewish people gathered one day a week to worship and to pray and to listen to the Old Testament scriptures being taught. And Jesus frequently attended the synagogues, and to teach there. It was important enough for Him to do so.

Now the reason why I'm pointing this out is, is that oftentimes I will hear this. And I think at times it's well meaning, it's just misguided. I will hear this comment or this thought. And maybe you've thought it or maybe you've said it. Oftentimes I'll hear this sentiment:

"Well, I don't need to go to church to follow Jesus because He said where two or more are gathered, there I am among them."

And Jesus said that in Matthew 18.

Or, "I love Jesus. I just don't like organized religion. Jesus came to do away with religion anyway, so I don't need to be a part of a church."

Now, can I just very lovingly but very directly say, you are not entirely wrong in saying those things. It's just that you're not entirely right. Jesus is present wherever two or more believers gather together. God's presence is not confined to four walls and a roof. There is nothing special about the building that you are sitting in. In fact, some of our campuses were former grocery stores. Some of you are sitting in the meat section right now. You didn't even know it. All right? Nothing special about it.



We are the church, the gathering of the Saints, God's people. Yet when Jesus made that statement in Matthew 18, listen to me. He wasn't redefining the church or making it optional. He was reassuring us that when we are seeking to live for Him, where two or more are gathered with the Spirit of God among, He is there with us. We are not alone. That's what he's saying. And that verse is emphasizing the authority and the presence of his spirit. It is not permission to opt out of the church.

Now, if you're still not convinced, one of the moves in our world today, is actually nothing new. It's nothing new under the sun. It's been happening for centuries. It's what we all have a tendency to do is, we'll pull Jesus words, the red letters out of the Gospels, and we'll try to make it as if it's in conflict with the rest of Scripture.

And you can't do that because Jesus is fully God. And God fully authored every word of Scripture. All Scripture is God breathed and Jesus is God. So Jesus affirms all of Scripture. Hebrews 10:

“Do not neglect meeting together.”

1 Corinthians 12:

“You can't be a lone-ranger body part.”

Acts 2:

“You need to be devoted to the teaching, to the fellowship, breaking of bread and prayer.”

Ephesians 4:

“Growth happens as each part does its work.”

Guys, the New Testament assumes that following Jesus means being meaningfully connected to a local church. Listen, not for your salvation, but for your sanctification. Because the way that we grow is with other people.

And by the way, people are messy. And you know what? You can't escape it. You might leave the church because you're like, “There's a bunch of hypocrites and they're messy people.” Yeah, you're just gonna find that everywhere you find two or more people, there's gonna be a mess.



And so I agree, Jesus came to do away with religion in the sense of the term. Religion means man's effort to get to God. The gospel is fundamentally different.

It is what God has done to reconcile us to Himself. And Jesus did not come to establish an organized religion, but He did come to give us a mission. It's called "The Great Commission" in Matthew 28. And being organized around that is not a bad thing. That's just called stewardship.

So, understand the definition of these words.

"Disorganized" means random, uncertain and chaotic.

"Organized" just implies some structure and some guidelines and some accountability.

And so Jesus died not just so that we might have a vague "spiritual vibe" with Him in our living room, but so that we might be invited to be ambassadors in this world and get in on His mission that He is seeking to accomplish. So it is a good thing for the gathering to have some structure and some policies and some procedures, because we're not just going to let anybody who walks in off the street serve in our kids in our kids ministry. Can I get a good "Amen?" I heard Wendell in the back say that.

He's like,

"Well, I've just showed up. I just feel like God has called me to kids ministry."

"That's great, man. We're still gonna do a background check."

Right? It's good to have budgets and controls so that we can be a good steward of resources. It is good to have a system for parking lots and entrances and exits. Maybe bad example because I know that the parking lot Hunger Games can be kind of a crazy thing at some of our campuses. And by the way, can we give it up for all of our parking lot Difference Makers right now? Man, serving in these freezing cold temperatures... Those men and women that are out there serving in the parking lot, we should lavish kindness upon them, man. We should not only do what they say, but we should encourage them.

Buy them cups of coffee, give them gift cards, man. They are serving us in freezing cold temperatures.



Guys, it is a good thing to come to the gathering and to be prayed up and planned up as we enter into the gathering. Listen, I am not up here winging it. I've been praying and planning, I've been organizing around this moment.

Now some of you may go, "Well, how dependent are you upon the Holy Spirit?" Very. Because actually there are a bunch of things that I say every week that I didn't plan on saying. And the Holy Spirit can work in your preparation and prayer before, just as much as in the moment.

Guys, I don't know where we got this idea that loose disorganization automatically equals greater spiritual maturity. Structure and process doesn't automatically mean legalism and power.

Jesus' Church isn't an organized religion — It is an organized rescue mission.

And much of the time, I'm not saying that this is your intent, if you've ever said that, but I do think that it can be underneath the surface for some and is, I suspect, when somebody defiantly says "they don't need the church to follow Jesus." Really what they mean is, "I don't want authority, accountability or inconvenience." And honestly I get that because the church is really, really messy.

But as I've already said, God grows messy people and you are not going to escape messy people. They're everywhere. And by the way, when we talk about church hurt, and I know church hurt can be a real thing, that those in ministry are probably the recipient. Jesus was the recipient of church hurt... they crucified Him. That church hurt is kind of an unfortunate process of growth and sanctification because people are messy.

Guys, in 25 years of full time ministry, the people that have blessed me the most have been the people that I've had the privilege of serving as pastor. And the people that have hurt me the most are the people that I've had the privilege of having to pastor.

Can I just say this? That here's just like a little peek into my world and how I have to have the Holy Spirit keep me on the rails... because almost on a daily basis, if it's not daily, it's every other day or at least weekly, I will get these two messages. It's the most consistent messages that I get via text, email or dm.

"Thank you for being my pastor. I'm so proud of you."

I get that message a lot. Grateful for that.



The other one,

"I'm so disappointed in you as my pastor, I'm leaving the church."

I get those almost daily. Now here's the deal.

If I'm not careful, then I let the compliments go to my head and the criticism go to my heart. And I gotta be sure, I gotta be sober minded and surefooted and I gotta get along with God and say, "Okay, I know all these people are saying this. God, what do you say?" Listen, man, Jesus didn't give his life on a cross so that we could just "vibe out" with Him at the coffee shop. He gave his life to redeem the Bride, which is His Church.

And so He's in the synagogue teaching. Look at verse 22. It says:

"The people were amazed at his teaching, for he taught with real authority—quite unlike the teachers of religious law." (NLT)

In other words, Jesus wasn't just entertaining them or telling stories or giving suggestions. His teaching had a weightiness to it that they had never heard before.

And Mark says they were "amazed." Why were they amazed? Because I think that His teaching was directed, it was clear, it was personal, it was bold, it was broken hearted. And the word is "authority." It's the first time that Mark uses the word "authority."

And I love the meaning of the word. It literally means this: out of the original stuff. The root word is "author." You can actually see it in the word, can't you? "Author-ity."

Jesus had authority. Why? Because he's the Author of life. He knows how it works best. And they could tell that these were not just man's words about God, these were God's words about man. And His listeners sensed He was explaining the story of their lives as the author. And they were amazed by it.

And we see that Jesus would, often throughout the gospels when He was teaching, start something like this... He would say:

"You have heard it said."

And He's oftentimes referring to Old Testament law or just maybe the common teachings of the rabbis during that day.



"But I say to you..."

He's got the authority to say that. Now, Jesus wasn't doing away with Old Testament law. He was saying, I've come to fulfill it. And in particular, Mark says Jesus had real authority as opposed to borrowed credibility, which was in sharp contrast to the scribes. And the scribes were experts in Old Testament law. And the scribes were the ones that would most often teach in the synagogues. And they based their authority largely on other rabbis.

So it was very common for a scribe when they were teaching, they would say, "Well, Rabbi, such and such said this." And it was a very safe way to teach because you never had to take any position for yourself. You could just reflect on other people's positions.

So if you got a nasty email, you could say, "Well, I didn't say it. Rabbi, such and such said it." Jesus does away with all that. Jesus speaks with real authority and He is still speaking with this real authority in Our lives today. The question is, do you have ears to listen? Are you hearing Him?

The world likes things to be relative, not authoritative. But here's the deal. If nothing is authoritative, then you can be your highest authority, and you will, by default. Your feelings become more authoritative than God's word. You can say, "Well, I know what God's word says, but I don't feel that. I don't like that."

Your ideas end up superseding his will. But Jesus is God, and God is author, which equals real authority. So in John 14, Jesus doesn't say that He is a way, one of many fine ways to get to God... He doesn't say that. He says, he's what? THE way.

It's access. He goes, "I'm the only one that has access to God." He doesn't say to you, "Hey, you just live your truth sincerely." He goes, "No, I am THE truth." He didn't say, "Live your best life." He says, "I am THE life."

And a lot of times we act like God is wrong until we are convinced He's right. Have you ever done that? You ever put God on trial in your life? You're like, "God, I suspect that you're wrong until you prove yourself right or until you bring yourself into alignment with my feelings." But if He's really God, then that means that I'm wrong and you're wrong until I agree with what He says. That's called submission to the lordship of Jesus Christ. Now, I knew it'd be quiet when I said that. It's been quiet all weekend long because we bristle at that.

The human side of us doesn't like it. Maybe those of you that are a little bit cynical, and if you're cynical, I get that, because by nature I'm a little bit cynical. And you'll be like, "Well, I don't want to be duped. I don't want to, like, be convinced that something is true when it's not true."



And we live in a world where if people clash over the ideological, which they do all the time, then we automatically think, well, somebody is a loser and somebody is a winner, or somebody is duped and this other person has the truth. And I want you to know that Jesus always links truth with freedom, and he is ultimate Truth. So John 1:14 says that Jesus came from God the Father, listen to this, full. Full of grace, full of truth. And I think most of the time, the way that our minds work, or at least my mind, is that that's impossible. It's gotta be 50% grace and 50% truth. But it's not.

He says it's 100% grace and 100% truth. He's full of both. They are not exclusive of each other and they are not opposites. The truth should always be gracious and grace should always be truthful. It's like two ingredients of the same nourishing meal: carbs and protein.

I know I shouldn't be talking about this when we're getting ready to fast. You don't want to overdo one or be deficient in the other. You want equal nutrients to have a nutritious meal. And most of the ideologies in our world either over emphasize grace or over emphasize truth. Jesus is full of both.

The genius of Jesus is that He knew the way in which you communicate truth is impacted by the condition of the listener's heart. And I've found that to be true.

If you follow the ministry of Jesus, you will see that if He was met with a hard hearted person, then He knew that they needed to hear tough truth. But a brokenhearted person like Zacchaeus or the woman at the well, He knew that they needed to hear tender truth, but He still gave them truth. Jesus does lots of both because the truth is a gift of God's grace.

John puts it so well in John 8:32, it says:

"Then you will know the truth..."

And the truth will what?

"It'll set you free."

That's what the truth does. The truth doesn't shame you. The truth doesn't bind you. The truth doesn't keep you from being fully who you are or your identity. Wherever you find your identity, the truth sets you free.



Implying that you and I are in bondage to sin and deceptive ideologies of the spirit of the age, Jesus has come to set you free from that. Now, naturally, if you feel a resistance to that, then that's to be expected.

Naturally. Jesus, if He's going to teach truth that authoritatively, Satan isn't just gonna roll over and let him say it, he's going to come against it. And that's exactly what happens in the very next verse. Look with me at your Bible.

Verse 23:

"Suddenly,"

Mark's favorite word,

"A man in the synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit cried out, why are you interfering with us?"

That's interesting. You might circle that word, "us."

"Jesus of Nazareth, have you come to destroy us? I know who you are. The Holy One of God. But Jesus reprimanded him. Be quiet." Mark 1:22-25 (NLT)

Now, English has kind of softened that up a little bit. In the literal Greek, it's stronger than that. It's more closely associated with our phrase "shut up." Which some of you are like, "We don't allow those words in our house." Well, Jesus said it. Email Him.

"Come out of the man,' He ordered. At that, the evil spirit screamed..."

That would have been probably not a very nice sound.

"...threw the man into a convulsion..."

That would have been a frightening sight.

"And then came out of him. And amazement gripped the audience, and they began to discuss what had happened. 'What sort of new teaching is this?' They asked, excitedly. 'It has such a authority, even evil spirits obey his orders.'" Mark 1:26-27 (NLT)

And I wrote in my notes as I was studying this this week that evil spirits obey Jesus. Question... Do you? Do I?



And I was super convicted by that, and I didn't want to sit on that for myself, so I just decided to let you be convicted, too.

Verse 28:

"The news about Jesus spread quickly throughout the entire region of Galilee."
Mark 1:28 (NLT)

So let's unpack this... It says that "in the middle of Jesus sermon, an evil spirit," your Bible might say "unclean." Those two terms are used interchangeably in the New Testament, and they mean demon. What's a demon? Well, demons are fallen angels who were kicked out of heaven with Satan. Satan and his fallen angels were constantly opposing Jesus work throughout his ministry, and they still are today.

That is what is meant by the term "spiritual warfare." Now, I don't know how you emotionally react to that term. I don't know what your baggage is with that term. Maybe you grew up in a church where maybe that's all they ever talked about, and you're like, "I'm kind of done with all that." Or maybe you grew up in a church where they never talked about that. And I think those are representative of the two errors that we can make as Christians when it comes to spiritual warfare.

See, if you were to pull back the curtain of the physical, you would see the realm of the spiritual, which the Bible talks about a lot, and that there is a spiritual battle being waged all around you for your soul. This is why the Scriptures say that our battle is not against flesh and blood. It's not against another person, it's not against another group. It's against the principalities and powers of darkness in the evil realm.

Now, the two errors that we can make are: Christians where that's all they ever want to talk about. You know, those people. And, you know, you crack your cell phone, you're like, "Oh, spiritual oppression. Demons." It's like, "No, you just dropped your phone. You just dropped your phone. Go fix the screen."

Or a Christian is like, "I don't believe in all that stuff. That's just, that's just superstitious nonsense and you don't see it anywhere."

Those are both two errors.

I think that we do not need to be frightened of the spiritual realm, and I'll tell you why in just a minute. We also do not need to be unaware of it.



You've heard me say this before....The only thing worse than being in a fight is being in a fight and not knowing you're in one. That's a sure way to lose. So I got four very quick observations about the demonic, and I want to make this really clear. These come straight out of these six verses. These are not just my opinions about the demonic. It's just not my feeling about the demonic. I'm not pulling these out of thin air. They come right out of the text. They're tied to verses.

Four demonic observations about this:

1. Demons often go to church

That's where Jesus encounters this demon. It wasn't in the street, wasn't in the nightclub. It was in the synagogue. So I just want you to know, man, like, Christians might fall out of getting into the habit of going to church. Demons are here every week.

A demon possessed a dude and then went to church that day. They were in the synagogue. And honestly, it's not surprising that they would show up to church because we are doing spiritual battle for the hearts and souls of men and women. Where else would they go? They're trying to interfere and oppose it.

They also love the comment section of social media, by the way. Just tuck that away, all right?

Demons can often be found among the religious because religion without Jesus has no power. Now, I want to be really clear. I sent out my sermon notes to the staff earlier this week like I always do, and just so they can read through it and be prepared and give any feedback. And one staff person emailed back and they said, "I'm really glad that you're teaching on this because I've just noticed a little bit of an uptick, especially with the younger generations, that they are having more encounters with the demonic. Don't really know what to do with that. But just like, demonic in dreams, encounters, you know, they're just asking a lot about that." And I don't really fully know what to do with all that. I do know that a very common narrative among a lot of Muslims who are coming to know Jesus in massive numbers is that they say it wasn't a sermon or somebody witnessing to them, it was that Jesus met them in a dream. I'm hearing that a lot. And so I don't know, maybe you're here, you'll be like, "I'm having some sort of an encounter with a demonic. And I'm not a weird person, I promise. I don't really know what this is about."

Can I just be really, really clear? You should not be afraid if you are a Christian. Christians cannot be possessed by a demon.



So let me just say this... If you're a Christian, and what I mean by that, it's not that you grew up Baptist or Catholic. It's not that, you know, you attended grandma's church when you were little one time. It's not that you believe in God. Only because, as we can see, that even the demons believe in God doesn't mean they're saved. So if you're a Christian, which meaning that you're acknowledging that Jesus is God, that he's Lord and Savior, you're confessing and repenting of sin, not accommodating for it, asking the Holy Spirit to reside within you, and you've been baptized, you're a Christian.

You may feel you're a crummy Christian, but join the club. Like, we're all in process, man. And it's not your work that makes you righteous, it's Jesus' finished work in which He gives you His righteousness. So if you're a Christian, you cannot be possessed by a demon. Why?

Because the Holy Spirit now resides in you. And the Holy Spirit is not going to let a demon move into the guest room. So you're like, "Well, Aaron, some funky stuff is happening right now and people are responding to me."

"Well, you might be strange. Doesn't mean you're possessed, man. You might be weird. We all are. Doesn't mean you're possessed."

However, I will say this... As a Christian, you can be, and most likely are, demon oppressed. There's a difference.

You're not demon possessed, but demon oppressed. Why? Because you are a threat to the enemy. Now, you've heard me say this before, that the birthmark of every believer is a bulls-eye. You've popped up on his radar. See, he's going to oppress you if he can get you to deconstruct from your faith. That is a major win for him.

So Mark tells us this guy was in the synagogue. He went to church that day. We don't know a lot about him. We don't know much of his backstory. But it's possible that maybe he was there and he was searching, he was hurting, he wanted deliverance. Maybe he went that day to sow seeds of division and confusion, which oftentimes will happen.

2 Timothy 3:5 warns us about terrible times in the last days. And there's a bunch of different signs of the last days. You know, kind of like pains of childbirth. And one of the signs, just notice if you recognize this anywhere in society... Here's what Paul says to Timothy, he says, "here's a sign, that there will be people that will..."

"having a form of godliness but denying its power." 2 Timothy 3:5 (NIV)

What does that mean?



Well, they say:

"Well, I'm a Christian. I just don't necessarily believe this is true."

"I'm a Christian, but that can't be what God means today."

"I'm a Christian. But we shouldn't judge others."

They can just do what they want to do. Form of godliness, denying its power. What may be behind that is the demonic. And Paul says,

"have nothing to do with such people."

You're like, 'Man, that doesn't sound very compassionate.' No, he's saying that if there's a demon that is involved, have nothing to do with that. See, listen, some people, they may be demon possessed or oppressed, not even knowing that they are the tool by which the demonic is working and speaking through. And some people have come to do reverse discipleship and stir up confusion. Satan masquerades as an angel of light. Guys, he knows the Scriptures better than you.

So there are some that love to talk about love, but they don't really want to talk about truth. They love to talk about peace, but they don't want to battle for righteousness. They love to say, "Who are we to judge? Jesus ate with sinners." And that is true. But they forget that the dinner conversation usually came around to, "Go and sin no more."

So the demons come to church here. Number two:

2. Demons are often triggered by the authoritative truth of God's word

So the demon uses the plural pronoun "us," indicating that he spoke for all demons. And it was the authoritative truth that Jesus spoke in verse 22 that brought this demonic manifestation to the surface, interrupting this church service in verse 23. Because the truth will always trigger demonic opposition and rage.

Satan's attack in the garden wasn't with a sword, it was with a sentence that deceived. "Did God really say?"

And he's still using that same sentence to deceive. And deceptive ideas that end up appealing to our disordered desires, which the Bible calls sin.



So don't be surprised if you speak the truth in love over sin issues and encounter demonic opposition. Do not be surprised if you just affirm the created order of the author of life. That God created two genders, male and female. That He created sex between a husband and a wife within the covenant of marriage. That abortion is the taking of innocent life... Do not be surprised if when you just affirm those things, that somebody opposes you.

There's a difference between disagreement and opposition. Disagreement is, "Well, I think I had an issue with the idea. Can we talk about that? What do you mean by that?"

Opposition is "I'm going to attack you in rage."

For example, if I came up to you and let's just say you have red hair, and I say you have black hair. You're probably going to disagree with me, but you're probably not going to go into a rage and attack me personally.

You're just going to go, "He's weird or possessed by a demon. I don't know. That's the color of hair that I have. That's just kind of strange."

If somebody told me that Jesus never historically existed, that He was not a historical figure, I would disagree. I might try to convince them otherwise, but I'm not going to waste a lot of time on it. I certainly wouldn't get angry. I wouldn't be thrown into a rage. I wouldn't try to oppose them because I know that He did. But if you speak truth to someone trapped in demonic deception, do not be surprised if they become enraged and attack you.

Why? Because the Truth of God's word interferes with the strategies of Satan, who is a deceiver and Father of Lies. Guys, in this season, right now, I've said it before... 2025, I've never experienced a year of ministry like that in my life. In fact, I met with a group of pastors all over the nation last week. The stories continue to be the same that all of us are reporting. Those of us who are pointing our people to the eyes of Jesus and teaching the Bible faithfully... Every church is growing that I know of. Like the media will tell you otherwise, but every church that I know of is growing in numbers, growing in small groups, growing in baptisms. I don't know that we're in revival. I do think we're in renewal.

I think there is an awakening that is happening to the Truth of Jesus more than anything I've ever seen in my lifetime. And it's happening in England right now as well. But with that comes increased opposition and we can expect it to be. So it's just the replaying of the Scriptures all over again. You read it in the Book of Acts everywhere, you see renewal and revival in Acts.



You see an equal and opposite reaction of riots, lawlessness, chaos and confusion. You gotta ask yourself, why do the same things keep happening, same demons, different days? Number three:

3. Demons believe in Jesus and know He's in charge

So do not think that it's enough just to believe in Jesus. Because even the demons believe in Jesus. That does not mean that they are saved.

And I just want to point this out. The demon immediately acknowledged who Jesus is. Verse 24:

The demon says, "You're Jesus of Nazareth, the Holy One of God."

And I just want to point out that that's the second time that Jesus has been announced as Messiah in Mark's Gospel in chapter one. Who delivered that message the first time? John the Baptist. He said, "You're the Messiah." The second one to deliver that message is a demon.

How ironic that this demon gets his orthodoxy right. He says that Jesus is the Holy One of God. This evil recognizes and acknowledges what many people are still trying to figure out, that many know about him, but they don't necessarily know him. Secularists see him as a good man or a moralist. Muslims see him as another prophet.

Jews see him as a false messiah. Hindus see him as a wise teacher. Buddhists see him as a compassionate historical figure. But ironically, this demon gets his identity right. Question, will you?

He knew him from eternity past. And now Jesus says, well, who do you say that I am? And notice this demon doesn't taunt or threaten Jesus. He knows better than that. He's not trying to pick a fight.

He clearly knew his place. Verse 24, He's like, "Have you come to destroy us?"

That's the posture. How cool would it be, guys, if you walked into a room and there was a gnarly looking demon in there, foam spewing out of his mouth, head spinning around, and he stops and he sees you and he's like, "Aw, man, Tom's here."

"Sarah just walked into the room."

"Did you come to ruin our demonic plans, guys?"



That would be so cool. And I want you to know that if you've got the spirit of God in you, that can be a reality, because greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.

It is not a fair fight. Like, it's not even close. And they know it. Which is why the Bible says you don't fight this war with physical weapons. You fight it in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Last point, number four:

4. Demons obey Jesus

Question... Will you notice Jesus doesn't argue with the darkness? He doesn't try to negotiate it with it. He doesn't say, "Well, I'll give you this if you'll give that."

He didn't do that. He commands it to come out. And the evil does what He says, Mark's favorite word, immediately.

Verse 27, "Even the evil spirits obey his orders."

And our battle, once again, is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers. It obeyed, but it still made a scene. It obeyed Him, but it screamed and threw the man into a convulsion.

And the spirit of the age will always do that. Where the spirit of the Lord is, chaos, confusion and lawlessness cannot coexist. And if we let the enemy set the agenda and we fight it according to the enemy's agenda, then you'll get sucked right into that. It will exhaust you and fill you with anxiety. Guys, you are not going to argue someone into truth if they are captivated by godless ideologies.

You have got to get as much Jesus into the hearts and minds of people as you can. That's why we sing the name of Jesus.

"Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom." 2 Corinthians 3:17 (NIV)

Now in the remainder of our passage, I'm going to bring this to a close.

Mark gives us a few more similar examples of how Jesus' authority confronts the brokenness of our world. They're going to dismiss the church service and then they're going to go right down the street to Peter's house. I told you I was in Capernaum. I stood at the ruins of the synagogue that we're reading about and literally I could see Peter's house. It's like you could throw a baseball and hit it just right down the street.



And they go into the living room and he's going to heal a fever, he's going to heal some disease and cast out more demons. Look at verse 29 and just notice we've said that Mark is fast paced and action packed. And these verses prove it. There's so much action here.

"After Jesus left the synagogue with James and John, they went to Simon and Andrew's home. Now Simon's mother in law was sick in bed with a high fever. They told Jesus about her right away. So he went to her bedside, took her by the hand and helped her sit up. Then the fever left her and she prepared a meal for them." Mark 1:29-31 (NLT)

Man, it's just a remarkable example that Jesus' authority covers not only the realm of the spiritual, but also the physical. He just cast out a demon, not a normal thing. And then same day He's going to heal a high fever. And then in verse 32, it says:

"That evening after sunset, many sick and demon possessed people were brought to Jesus." (NIV)

I just want to make this observation. I've already said that Capernaum is just this beautiful, like, picturesque little fishing village on the northeast side of Capernaum. Like, if you ever go there, it's beautiful, it's picturesque. It sits up on this hill, it's gorgeous. But the reality in the spiritual was that it was dark. Same thing can be true of the north side of Indy, or in certain places where it seems like everybody's got it all together, is that we can be oppressed by the evil.

"And the whole town gathered at the door to watch. So Jesus healed many people who were sick with various diseases. He cast out many demons. But because the demons knew who He was, He did not allow them to speak." Mark 1:33-34 (NLT)

I love the fact that Mark throws that sentence in there. Just picture that with me: Jesus walks into a room, there's the demons, and He's like, "Zip it." And they have to obey. I just love that. News of Jesus healing the demon possessed man in the synagogue and then Him healing Peter's mother in law from a high fever creates this frenzy in Capernaum. And it stirred the hopes of other people who were suffering.

And revival breaks out in Capernaum. Jesus casts out a demon and healed a fever. Here's what they're thinking, "Maybe He could heal me." Can I just say, maybe there's somebody listening to the sound of my voice right now, and you're going, "You know what, if Jesus could do that, maybe he could do that for me."



And I want to say, "Absolutely, He can." Whatever it is that's afflicting you, whatever it is that you need to be set free from, whatever it is that you were held in bondage from, Jesus can heal that and set you free from it.

So all these people are coming to see and they're packing out the house like, "Jesus, we got to get to you."

Here's what I just want to point out to you as we close. I just want you to see how Jesus reacted to this sudden boost of popularity. Look at what He did:

"Very early in the morning..."

Some of you are like, how early? This is the 11:15 service. I know for some of you, 10 o' clock is like super early. Here's how early:

"While it was still dark."

You're like, wow, that's actually a thing? Yeah, that's a thing.

"Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed."
Mark 1:35 (NIV)

"Solitary place." There, the original languages is "eremos," which means desert. It's kind of interesting because there is no desert in Capernaum. Capernaum was lush. It was beautiful.

So this is spiritual reality, not physical description. So he's basically saying Jesus went to an isolated place and it felt like He was in a desert. It's the same word used earlier in chapter one to describe the wilderness that Jesus fasted in for 40 days, which suggests this Jesus was doing war.

Jesus got up early in the morning not to just have His nice little warm cup of coffee and, you know, have His nice little morning devos. Jesus, this was a time of real spiritual testing. And He knew in order to continue, He had just contended with demons and He had cast out a high fever and disease. And He knew if He was going to continue, He had just stirred up the whole spiritual realm and He was going to have to pray. Here's the application for us... If Jesus needed that, we need it all the more.

Mark only mentions two other times where Jesus prayed, ironically, Mark 6 after walking on water. Mark 14, when Jesus prayed right before his arrest and crucifixion. All three times Mark mentions that Jesus prayed was when he was doing battle against the spiritual and he might have been tempted to take the easy way, way out. And He's asking God for spiritual strength.



Guys, what a time to begin the 21 days of prayer and fasting, to just realize, "God, I'm going to let go of these things that I become dependent upon in my flesh that are not bad in and of themselves, so I can grab a hold of more of you. If Jesus needed it, I need it all the more."

And the language indicates that it wasn't a quick prayer. He was actually in prayer for hours. And He was still praying by the time Peter came to get Him, as indicated by verse 36. And I'm going to close with verse 36:

"Simon and his companions went to look for him, and when they found him, they exclaimed: 'Everyone is looking for you!' Jesus replied, 'Let us go somewhere else'" Mark 1:36-38 (NLT)

His impulse wasn't to build on the platform. It was to go somewhere else.

"to the nearby villages—so I can preach there also. That is why I have come."
Mark 1:38 (NLT)

"I didn't come to be their party trick. I came to set people free for all of eternity."

So He traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons. The verb Mark uses in verse 36 indicates that the disciples were a little bit exasperated and they had a little bit of a selfish motive. And I can't necessarily blame them because I put myself in their sandals, I probably would have thought the same.

That's like, "I just left my dad's fishing business to follow after this revolutionary who said he's going to change the world." I'm thinking, "Let's go. Jesus just cast out a whole bunch of demons on day one. This is going to get good. Jesus, come on, man. We just got 100,000 subscribers on YouTube. Let's build this thing."

And he's like, "Nope." And it's not that Jesus didn't. It's not that there wasn't more physical ailments to heal in Capernaum or more demon possession to throw out.

I think that he could have been there for days. And I don't think that it's because Jesus didn't care about the remaining people. I think that He did. I think that Jesus knew "The longer I stay here and do this, the more they will just want me for what I can do for them and not for me, myself."



And guys, that's honestly the question that you got to ask yourself. Jesus is king and He has authority, and He refuses for you to come to Him on your terms. And your terms might be, "Well, God, I've got you on trial and until you can prove yourself right, when in reality it's 'I'm wrong until I agree with what you say,' it's not this idea of, 'well, Jesus, I need you to do for me what I need you to do for me. And if you don't do for me what I want you to do for me, then I don't think that you have the power.'"

I don't think that you have King. You are the king. And Jesus is like, "No, I don't come to you on your terms. I come to you on my terms." And it's what is meant by author of life.

It's what's meant by King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Here's the question:

Do you want Jesus for who Jesus is, or do you just simply want him for what he'll do for you?

Here's the problem: It's not that Jesus doesn't want to do stuff for you. It's not that Jesus doesn't want to bring healing into your life or deliver you from something physical or help you in the realm of the finance. He wants to do all those things. In fact, He's waiting to do all those things. It's just that we have a tendency to treat Him like a cosmic vending machine. And have you ever done this?

You get what you want and then you forget who gave it to you, and then you kind of walk away from them. And he's like, "Hey, wait, wait a second."

The Scriptures say that if you'll surrender your heart to Him, He'll give you all the desires of your heart. You just got to get the order right. So here's what I want to ask us to do:

And just as we wrap up in the remainder of our time, I just want to give you an opportunity to surrender your life to the King, King Jesus. Together today, you may still have questions, and you probably do. You maybe have some healing from something in your past you need to heal from. And He'll bring some healing into your life. You may have some stuff you want to get cleaned up... But you invite Jesus into your life so He can clean it up with you. And maybe right now your heart is tender enough right now that you're just ready to pray this prayer with me. And if so, let me just lead you in it.



Father, I come to you right now, and I don't know it fully, fully what's happening here, but I feel stirred and I acknowledge your Holy Spirit. I don't know how all this works, and quite honestly, I'm still a little cynical and I don't want to be hurt or duped. But God, I do know that me living my life as if I'm the highest authority, isn't working.

And me living my life as if my feelings and emotions, as true as they may be, do not ultimately lead to truth. And so I acknowledge that you are Lord and you are author of life. And so I choose to submit to you. Would you please forgive me of my sins? Would you come into my heart?

I choose to obey you in baptism. And from this day forward, I will do my best to follow after you. Reliant upon your grace like oxygen, as you form me more and more into the image and likeness of your son, Jesus. Would you please come into my life today? And I ask this in Jesus name. Amen.

Hey, the Bible says that the angels rejoice in heaven over one person who confesses, "Jesus is Lord." So we can be confident that at least one person did. So we join them in celebration right now.

And if there is something you need to be healed from or something you need to be delivered from, then, as we worship and sing, you can come and you can pray with prayer counselors that would love to pray with you. So would you please stand to your feet right now?

