

March 12th, 2023 AM – Pastor Kevin Olivier

Luke 4:31-37 – “Christ Has Authority”

- A. Why do you follow Jesus? The events we just read in **Lu 4** gives us some answers as to why we should put our faith in Jesus.
- B. Today’s text follows immediately after Luke’s recording of the beginnings of Christ’s active, public ministry. In **v14**, we read that, “**News about Him spread through all the surrounding district.**” He preached in synagogues of the region of Galilee on His way down to Nazareth.
- C. He wasn’t welcomed at His own home synagogue. In **Lu 4:24**, Jesus attributed it to the fact that “**No prophet is welcome in his hometown.**” They sought to throw Jesus off a cliff!

The life & ministry of Jesus pointed to His divine authority.	I. CHRIST’S AUTHORITY IN PREACHING II. CHRIST’S AUTHORITY OVER DEMONS
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I. CHRIST’S AUTHORITY IN PREACHING → **vv31-32.**

A. In **v32**, you may not have noticed how very differently the people received the preaching of Jesus in comparison to the teaching of the Jewish scribes, priests, Pharisees, & Sadducees.

- 1. Those hearing Jesus in Galilee “**were amazed at His teaching.**”
 - a. The Greek word here can also be translated as “**astonished**” as in the NKJV or ESV.
 - b. Jesus was able to keep the attention of the people. He wasn’t a boring preacher.
- 2. The reason many were overwhelmed with His preaching was because “**His message was with authority.**”
 - a. When a Sadducee stood up to preach, those listening had to endure men who were not convinced of very basic important doctrines of Scripture such as the resurrection.
 - b. When the Scribes or Pharisee taught in the synagogue, they would often lay upon the people legalistic burdens that were even too heavy for them to bear. In fact, “**they themselves [were] unwilling to move them with so much as a finger**” (**Mat 23:4**).
- 3. When Jesus began teaching, His preaching was like a breath of fresh air for a weary people.

B. Imagine how the Jewish preachers would read Scripture & mostly cited various commentators.

- 1. There are some who preach like that today.
- 2. Theology is magnificent; however, only reading Scripture, citing other theologians, & explaining theology is more of a seminary class lecture rather than true preaching like that of Jesus.
 - a. Pastor Stuart Olyott carefully analyzed the preaching of Jesus & wrote a magnificent little book about it called, *Ministering Like the Master*.
 - b. According to Olyott, the preaching of Jesus is marked by 3 things in a repeated fashion as in the Sermon on the Mount:
 - a. Jesus explained or taught the truth (i.e. theology).
 - b. Jesus illustrated the truth using matters or things of everyday life.
 - c. He then applied the truth.

C. Christ’s teaching with authority in this beautiful & accessible fashion isn’t sufficient to prove His divine authority; however, what came next clearly proves His true identity.

II. CHRIST'S AUTHORITY OVER DEMONS

- A. Most Jews didn't know the true identity of Jesus during His earthly ministry. They thought He was a carpenter— the son of Joseph. The demons knew exactly who He was! → **v33-34**
1. It seems the demon possessing this man couldn't stand the authoritative preaching of God's Word & especially the voice of the eternal Son of God. It cried out in protest.
 2. Demons spend most of their time seeking to nurture unbelief, wickedness, hypocrisy, & false religion in everyone that they can.
 - a. **2 Cor 4:3-4** "Even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God."
 - b. The devil & his minions have an active hand in promoting atheism.
 - c. One of their favorite tactics is to promote a naturalistic worldview that denies anything that is at all supernatural, including the existence of God, angels, & demons.
 - 1) You don't have believe Satan exists to be deceived by him.
 - 2) Demons want you think that God is dead— that He is a mere figment of man's imagination; however, at they same time here we have a demon calling Jesus "the Holy One of God" (v34).
 - 2) Despite their hypocritical, diabolical deception, they know God exists & that Jesus is the holy, divine Messiah who has the power to cast them into the lake of fire.
- B. When the demon possessed man cried out against His preaching, Jesus demonstrated His divine authority by casting it out of the man. → **v35**
1. Wonderful & amazing miracles were performed by the power of God working through OT prophets such as Elijah & Elisha. Both men even were used by God to raise the dead; however, no prophet has ever been recorded as casting out demons with authority.
 2. Jesus later explained in **Lu 11:20**, "But if I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you."
- C Notice the reaction among those who witnessed this new, magnificent sign & wonder. → **vv36-37**
1. The Greek word translated "message" in the NASB here is "logos." It is most commonly translated as "word." Those present saw this as a message, word, or sign from God.
 2. This wasn't just something new in the history of the region of Galilee; this was something new, mighty, & magnificent in the history of the world. Ever since the creation, it had never been witnessed before! The finger of God in the person of Jesus the Messiah was made manifest.

Review, further application, & conclusion: