

July 27

Popularity

Behold, my servant...he shall be exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high. Like as many were astonished at you...so shall he sprinkle many nations; – Isaiah 52:13-15

[Mark 1:21-38, Capernaum] They went into Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and immediately on the Sabbath day he entered into the synagogue and taught. They were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as having authority, and not as the scribes, for his word was with authority. Immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit (demon), and he cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Ha! Ah! What do we have to do with you, Jesus, you Nazarene? Have you come to destroy us? I know you who you are: the Holy One of God!"

Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!"

The unclean spirit, when the demon had thrown him down in their midst, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him, having done him no harm. They were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, "What is this word? A new teaching? For with authority and power he commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him!" The report of him went out immediately everywhere into all the region of Galilee and its surrounding area.

Immediately, when they had come out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's wife's mother lay sick with a great fever, and immediately they told him about her and begged him for her. He came and took her by the hand, stood over her, rebuked the fever, and raised her up. The

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fever left her, and she served them. At evening, when the sun had set, they brought to him all who were sick, and those who were possessed by demons. All the city was gathered together at the door. He healed many who were sick with various diseases, *He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying: "He took our infirmities, and bore our diseases."* [Isaiah 53:4] Demons also came out from many, crying out, and saying, "You are the Christ, the Son of God!" and he didn't allow the demons to speak, because they knew him.

Early in the morning, while it was still dark, he rose up and went out, and departed into a deserted place, and prayed there. Simon and those who were with him followed after him; and they found him, and told him, "Everyone is looking for you." and the multitudes looked for him, and came to him, and held on to him, so that he wouldn't go away from them.

He said to them, "Let's go elsewhere into the next towns, that I may preach the good news of the Kingdom of God there also, because I came out for this reason."

Jesus went about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the Good News of the Kingdom, and healing every disease and every sickness among the people. The report about him went out into all Syria. They brought to him all who were sick, afflicted with various diseases and torments, possessed with demons, epileptics, and paralytics; and he healed them. Great multitudes from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and from beyond the Jordan followed him.

[Luke 4:31-43, Matthew 8:16-17, 4:23-25]

1. Why didn't Jesus allow demons to speak? Why did he depart to a deserted place?
2. Have you been popular? Did it last? How did it affect your prayer life?
3. Jesus, your Father lifted you up, then the crowds turned on you; help me to stay...