

This Sermon was Preached at Good Shepherd Baptist church
Through Zoom by Rev. Stephen Guantai
January 31st, 2021

Scripture: Mark 1:21-28

Message: "Be Aware of Demonic spirits."

Awareness is a critical aspect of life. These days, we are always advised to be aware of our surroundings. And if you see something, say something.

Today, I would like to urge us to not only be aware of physical world but also spiritual world -that is the unexplainable that are happening around. And in order to do, our inner spirits must be in tune with God's Spirit; so that we can be able to detect demonic spirits that are causing chaos among God's people.

In his book, *Snatched From Satan's Claws*, Evangelist Mukendi describes how he was groomed by Satan with the help of his father to perform satanic acts. He talks about how he, with 140 others from all over the world, were invited to train at a Bible school. And how after training, they use to terrorize people. He talks explicitly about how demonic forces were used to cause injuries and deaths wherever he went. But nobody was aware that he was possessed by a demon. However, in His loving kindness, God delivered him from those demonic powers.

If you read that book, you will understand why in the Lord's prayer, we pray, "Deliver us from evil."

Satan never rests; he is always at work. After failing to succeed when he tempted Jesus in the wilderness. He continued following Jesus wherever He went, causing pain and suffering among God's people. But the Good News is that Jesus defeated him on cross.

Today, I want to speak about this Jesus who has the power to change our lives and set us free. For this was his mission on earth, as the Bible reminds us in

Matthew 4:23, *“Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in the synagogues, preaching, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.”* (NIV)

What made Jesus’s teachings unique is that He did it with holiness and authority from God. Holiness in the sense that power of God the Father was upon him. Mark points out that Jesus’s teachings was different from that of the scribes.

Different in the sense that even the demonic spirits that was among God’s people felt threatened and started complaining. Verse 23 says, “Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit and he cried out, ‘what have to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, The holy one of God.

And when Jesus rebuked and ordered the evil spirit to come out of the man; the demonic spirit did not go out without fighting! Mark 1:25 says, the evil spirit tried to straggle(not struggle) the man. Crying out with loud voice as he went out. Mm -does this sound familiar?

What Jesus did make the crowd ask, “What is this? For his teachings was amazingly different from that of the scribes.

Who were the Scribes? They were a group of Jewish professionals who were highly respect for their work of copying documents, especially royal manuscripts.

In the 1st Century, the scribes and the Pharisees were the two religious’ groups of people who had full knowledge of the laws, and capable of interpreting them as well as manipulating them. So, they were the ones who could draft legal documents such as marriage and divorce certificates, inheritance, land sale, etc.

The Greek word for scribe is grammateus, which means a writer. They also twisted God's laws by adding their laws and traditions, and as a result, they got paid. However, not all scribes were evil. There were some honest scribes, such as Ezra (Ezra 7:6). Who was an honest man, and the Bible says the hand of God was upon him

So, how is Jesus teachings different from that of the scribes? For one, people were used to scribes coming and performing religious rituals, and traditions, which left people still in the darkness. Because they were more interested in protecting their own rather than please God.

This is one way that Satan blind people to the extend that they will not be aware of their presence. The in synagogue is an example of how Satan works.

This makes me wonder if what is happening in our country today is not being engineered by these kind demonic forces. Otherwise, how else can we describe, all the violence and the threat of domestic terrorism?

Please understand, I am not in any sense calling anybody evil or demonic, because God created good people. My point here is, there are the evil spirits that enters a person and make him or her do evil things.

Remember Judas Iscariot, (Luke 22:3) who betrayed Jesus wasn't a bad person; but when demonic spirit entered him, he betrayed Jesus just for a little amount of money.

Needless to say, what we are experiencing in this country and around the world is nothing but demonic forces. And they are after nothing but bringing hatred among God's people.

We must be aware of these forces, because as Dr. King once said, "Like an unchecked cancer, hate corrodes the personality and eats away its vital unity.

Hate destroys a man's sense of value and his objectivity. It causes him to describe what is beautiful as ugly and the ugly as beautiful and to confuse the true with the false and false with true." With the power of God, we must resist evil. And pray that God may liberate us from the spirit of hatred.

In their book, *Bible & Ethics in Christian Life*, Birch and Rasmussen write, "If God-in-Christ is the liberator from evil in the hearts and minds of human beings as well as in the structures of human society itself, and human beings are themselves empowered by God as co-participants in the dram of redemption...".

Therefore, as believers, God is calling us to be aware of these demonic forces and resist its actions. We must prayerfully think about what is happening and pray for God wisdom and strength to lovingly resist what is evil.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, these are evil days. We are faced with challenges, and need to be careful with how we respond as Christians.

I am aware I have quoted these powerful words before; so, as I conclude, let me once more remind us of the words of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's., Speech of December 1964, that "Nonviolence is the answer to the crucial political and moral questions of our time; the need for mankind to overcome oppression and violence without resorting to oppression and violence. Mankind must evolve for all human conflict, a method which rejects revenge, aggression, and retaliation. The foundation of such is Love".

Let us go out and be on the watch out and love one another as Christ loves us.
Amen