

Jan. 31, 2021 Mk. 1:21-28. Deut. 18:15-20

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ENTERING THE SCENE:

With Mark's characteristic urgency, we are thrust into the conflict of whose understanding of God is the right one. Obviously, Jesus' teaching impressed the people as being very different that what they got from their other teachers. Immediately the spirit of the status quo recognizes a threat to its dominance and accuses Jesus of trying to destroy it. The people identify the spirit as coming from evil and are amazed at how Jesus had authority over it. It seems like the people had their 'truth detectors' turned on. Now we need to turn ours on as well.

Mk. 1:21-28

21 They went to **Capernaum**, and when the **Sabbath** came, Jesus went into the **synagogue** and began to **teach**. 22 The people were **amazed** at his **teaching**, because he **taught** them as one who had **authority**, not as the **teachers of the law**. 23 Just then a man in their **synagogue** who was **possessed** by an **evil spirit** cried out, 24 What do you want with us, **Jesus of Nazareth**? Have you come to **destroy** us? I **know** who you are --the **Holy One of God!**" 25 Be **quiet!**" said Jesus **sternly**. "**Come out of him!**" 26 The **evil spirit** **shook** the man **violently** and **came out** of him with a **shriek**. 27 The people were all so **amazed** that they asked each other, "What is this? A new **teaching**--and with **authority!** He even gives **orders** to **evil spirits** and they **obey** him." 28 **News** about him spread **quickly** over the **whole region** of Galilee.

DISCUSSION QUESTION: The people could identify the source of the evil spirit that day in the synagogue. How do you identify the source of a 'spirit' today?

PRAYER: Lord, I find it hard to question the source of a teaching when it agrees with what I think or want. Yet, you give me a conscience that starts ringing alarm bells when it senses something isn't quite right about something. My mind goes to work on it and finds all kinds of "good" reasons to ignore the bells, but your love keeps the bells ringing. Help me to cherish those alarm bells and heed them. Amen.