

The Character of Jesus 11
Healing a Demoniac in a Synagogue
Mark 1:21 – 28, Luke 4:31 - 37

- Characteristic: Competency
 - Immediately: Jesus did not spend a lot of time preparing His new disciples, but rather let them learn by observing.
 - Speaking with certainty rather than with many citations
 - The conclusions of past teachers were not helpful in establishing truth, only uniformity. Conclusions based on simple logic and the Scriptures should be sufficient.
 - Although Jesus' message in this place was not recorded, the lessons which are contained in the gospels were easy to understand (the words, not necessarily the concepts) and generally built on truisms rather than technical exposition.
 - Most translations use "authority" in verses 22 and 27. However, Jesus had not revealed His authority yet, so the crowd was commenting on style, not position.
 - Someone who had been possessed by a demon was "in their synagogue," implying that he was a member.
 - Unclean spirits were soon to be eliminated (Zechariah 13:1 – 2, 2 Peter 2:4, Jude 6). This malady is not to be confused with mental illness, but with literal overtaking of the human spirit by a spirit allied with Satan.
 - It is not clear whether the crowd knew previously of the demon in the man. Either way, the synagogue crowd had some ringers in it.
 - The demon was coherent, with only slight error in fact.
 - The demon knew that Jesus was the Messiah.
 - The demon exaggerated only slightly. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8), their destruction not coming until Judgment (2 Peter 2:4, Jude 6).
 - Jesus did not accept advertising from the dark side. Perhaps this was only because it was not time for proclamation. More likely, Jesus did not want to appear to be in league with the devil (as He was accused later in Matthew 12:24). Plus, the testimony of a liar is not worth much.
 - That the demon came out upon Jesus' command was remarkable to the audience. Again, the idea is competency rather than power. He just spoke; He did not use force.
- Applications
 - From the previous characteristic of preparing leaders for the future, on-the-job training appears to be the better option.
 - Be simple, direct, and logical. We rarely agree with everything in past teachings, so picking just the parts we like to bolster our conclusions is not logical.
 - Expect a few ringers.
 - Address challenges directly and simply.
 - Complexity spoils everything. The ordinary person just gets lost, so believes nothing.
 - If you can't think of a good answer now, think about it so as to be prepared for next time.
- Don't bother collecting endorsements. They aren't worth much.