



ST. ANDREW'S IN THE PINES EPISCOPAL CHURCH

SERMON
2-8-15

- I. Good sermon in the Mark reading about the rhythm of how Jesus lived his life
 - a. Prayer/solitude- community – ministry
 - b. It's a wonderful vision and teaching but I've bought the book and you can all read it during Lent if you wish.
- II. I want to preach about demons – demons. They are mentioned four times in today's reading and all the commentaries I read this week never even give them a nod or mention. There was one in last week's reading also.
 - a. But I have two questions about these demons.
 - b. 1. Why do the demons know how Jesus is?
 - c. 2. Why won't Jesus let them speak about Him?
- III. What do you know about demons?
 - a. Phrase – his demons trouble him or get the best of him
 - b. Movies like the Exorcist – casting out demons.
 - c. Appear as other-worldly or just some part of who we are- parts that trouble us.
 - d. Usually understood as bad or evil- fallen angels, unclean spirits
- IV. Story of Bill Ewing casting out the demon – it was really about releasing a woman from being bound up and unable to live with freedom and joy and wholeness.
- V. Definition that a demon divides a person, or thwarts or hinders them from being God's person. They have power and it is used to control someone.
- VI. So- why do they recognize or know Jesus? I think because they are a force of control – a power opposed to God, we talk of gods and powers – they are in a league that is used to exert power and control over others and they can recognize the Ultimate Power – the true one – the One that has all power. They don't want to have their power/control lessened or exposed to the good of the one God's power.
 - a. Book- The Word before the Powers. That when the divine Logos – the divine Word is spoken no other power can rule or win. God's Word – come out of him – that Word is the true word, the word that must be obeyed. Get the behind me, Satan.
- VII. So, if because demons are controlling lesser powers – and God's word or the word spoken by Jesus is God's word – why won't Jesus let them identify Him to others?
 - a. Why does he want his truth and power kept secret?
 - b. Writers speak of Mark having the theme of the Messianic Secret. Over and over Jesus tells demons and others – don't tell other people, go home and tell no one that I have healed you. Don't tell them who I am.

- VIII. And although this idea of a Messianic Secret is pointed out – the reason for it is uncertain. But looking again at the power or presence of demons – here is what I think.
- a. Demons control people – they lie to them, they manipulate them.
 - b. When we control and manipulate other people – it relates to what I spoke of last week in the sermon – good advice is hard to take. Everyone HAS to come up with their own answers. We change when we are ready to hear, when we are ready to change, when we can own our own decisions. If we are manipulated or controlled by others in what we must think and do – it is not true to us. We have learned nothing – we only obey or put up with the power forcing us to be who they want us to be.
 - c. So, Jesus want us to decide whether He is our Messiah on our own. We can hear testimony, we can witness miracles and hear stories, we can be taught, we can pray and think and ask questions. But demons control us – they make demands of us.
 - d. Demons are not the power that Jesus wants out there telling who He is or what we must believe. Neither does Jesus want people to learn he is the Messiah from friends and family and testimony of other people. I really think that Jesus wants us all to make up our own minds.
- IX. He asks his disciples – Who do people say that I am? But who do you say that I am? We must take our own journeys of decisions and convictions.
- a. And in removing the controlling demons – we will have the freedom to do just that. Get thee behind me, Satan. I want to walk as a Child of the light. I want to follow Jesus.

Thanks be to God.