

RENEWAL COMES THROUGH TIME WITH GOD

Jesus Launches his Ministry at Capernaum

Text: Mark 1:21-39

Dr. Robert J. Wafula

Principal, Friends Theological College, Kenya

Scripture Mark 1:21-29

They went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, 'What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.' But Jesus rebuked him, saying, 'Be silent, and come out of him!' And the unclean spirit, throwing him into convulsions and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, 'What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.' At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them. That evening, at sunset, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. And the whole city was gathered around the door. And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. And Simon and his companions hunted for him. When they found him, they said to him, 'Everyone is searching for you.' He answered, 'Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do.' And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

Message

- I. Jesus launched his ministry with his disciples at the city of Capernaum. Christ surprised
 - a. In spite of his growing popularity, Christ surprised his new disciples by withdrawing to a place of solitude and prayer.
 - b. Jesus taught truth to his disciples. He also demonstrated the truth he taught.
 - He revealed in practical ways what he desired his disciples to grasp
 - Capernaum became a key center for all events and learning.
 - c. In early stages, Jesus' authority was both displayed and challenged.
 - His power was revealed and challenged.
 - But it also proved victorious.
 - d. Jesus taught his disciples the importance of having time with the Father.
 - To be strong, one must be prepared. Prayer is part of that preparation.
 - Jesus walked his disciples through a practical school of discipleship.
- II. Jesus spoke and taught with great authority. Mark 1:21-28.
 - a. He passed his disciples through real life situation. He taught them unusual authority.

- b. He was not highly schooled but he challenged the trained and teachers of the law.
 - c. Challenge to his authority:
 - Look what could have happened if the evil spirits did not obey his authority?
 - Jesus would have been perceived weak and foolish.
 - Jesus was in full control and his authority was upheld beyond question.
 - Jesus authority was powerful then and remains powerful to this day. That's why when we pray in his name, our prayers get answered.
- III. Jesus Ministered with unusual Power: Mark 1:29-34
- a. Although he was one with great authority and power, Christ was also compassionate.
 - When told of Simon's mother-in-law's illness, Jesus responded with compassion
 - He was willing to go out of his way to minister to her needs.
 - b. Jesus' compassion was (is) seen in three actions:
 1. He went to her
 2. He took her hand
 3. He helped her
 - Both, the humanity and divinity of Christ are seen in those actions.
 - Jesus was capable of dealing with these two undesirable afflictions – sickness and demon possession.
 - Jesus controlled the situation and accomplished his goal.
 - Jesus; timing is perfect and his wisdom is unfailing.
- IV. Jesus Exemplified the source of spiritual accomplishment: Mark 1:35-39.
- a. Jesus pulled away to rest his physical body and to renew his spirituality.
 - b. He kept things in proper perspective and in balance.
 - We are often consumed with daily responsibilities and feel that we do not have time for devotion and prayer.
 - c. No amount of public ministry could take the place of quiet time and alone time with the Father.
 - To Jesus, prayer was of higher priority.
 - Friends, I find great symbolism in these words, "Very early in the morning while it was still dark..." To me it means: I have to pay my attention to God before my mind is cluttered with daily events.
 - It implies, putting my God first before all my undertakings.
 - d. Time alone with God rejuvenates us for service.
 - Jesus was not avoiding his responsibility by spending time with God.
 - He was preparing himself for duty.
 - Jesus knew that his strength and power came from God.
 - e. Jesus' disciples did not yet understand these dynamics.
 - They were focused on accomplishments, especially when they said, "Everyone is looking for you..." (v.37).
 - f. Prayer should be viewed as the time for daily renewal and refueling.

Application

1. What things do you consider most important in your daily life?

2. In what order would you rate these things in terms of importance?
3. In terms of time, what time seems to work best for prayer and devotion?

Just think about this: On a scale of 1-5 (5 being the most important), how would you describe your prayer life?

May the peace of God be with you Friends.