

Mark 1:21-28: Jesus' Authority; Spiritual Warfare

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[0 : 0 0] It's just so wonderful to be able to fellowship and encourage one another and all those things. All those things. I do have some announcements I want to follow up on. I'll go ahead since Roger asked me to talk about the fair. So the fair is something we've done in the past. It's been a few years. In fact, I think it has been like three years or maybe 2019 since yeah the whole COVID thing. So but we've done a booth at the fair. We've done I think two or three of them where we'll just take an opportunity to share the gospel with people really pass out Bibles tracks and engage in conversation with people just to talk about their spiritual condition and the gospel of the grace of God. So we're looking to do that at the Green County or not the Green County the Clark County Fair said they didn't have any space for us at least not anything inside and so we definitely want to be inside in the summer. But we're going to go ahead and look at doing the Champaign County Fair and I'll probably just maybe call some people we had a sign up list just to see who would be interested. I'll just probably call and follow up with those people and just make sure that everybody's still still good with those dates and with not being in an air conditioned space and for some people that's just a deal breaker and that's fine. We do it is more of a limited time there's not as many hours that we really need to be there during the day so it's a little bit less of a commitment but it's still a week long to try to fill up some slots in the afternoon. So but I think we'll be able to do it and I'm looking forward to that. Again happy Mother's Day. You know mothers is another one of God's great ideas and I sure appreciate mine and I you know this is a wonderful day to to tell our moms how much we love and appreciate them but I do want to say don't wait just once a year.

There's plenty of times throughout the year to make sure you let your let your mom know if if you still if uh if she's still around that you love and appreciate her and speaking of Mother's Day we have a I don't want to say a new mother but we have another baby that was just born on Friday and so Taylor Renner anybody noticed was great with child and now she has delivered and in fact I saw on Facebook I wrote it down she said this was the labor and delivery of my dreams so obviously it went pretty well um which I am so glad to hear but we've got little Bennett Richard Renner who was born on Friday at eight and a half pounds a big boy and so I'm getting I'm looking forward to uh to meeting Bennett sometime soon after mom and family get a chance to arrest from from all that we talked about the pregnancy resource center and the fair um the last thing we still have some of those tracks left over we had this coronation and of King Charles and um it's just something that's in the news so this is something a track that might catch people's eye oh King Charles is in the news you know what's this about you know there's his face on this and it looks like money so people are always drawn to that right and so last week we took about 20 or 30 of them and we ended up we have Young's dairy anybody been to Young's dairy and so there's always lots of cars out there so we stopped on the way and we stuck these on windshields all over people's cars and so there's still I don't know maybe 50 or 100 left so uh there's probably a small window before these are less interesting to people so if you have the opportunity to give those away that'd be great all right well are you right we've been in the book of

Mark and uh let's jump back in so if you have your bible we've been in Mark for a few weeks and so we're still in Mark chapter one one of the things that's interesting about this book of Mark is at least with chapter one here it's a very dense chapter there's a lot in this first chapter the later well really the whole book of Mark is pretty dense it's the shortest of all the gospels and it packs a lot into a small space it doesn't go into as much detail as some of the other gospels if you look in Matthew and Luke there's a lot of overlap but usually Matthew and Luke will expound in things that Mark just kind of briefly touched on but uh we uh we're here in Mark we're going to start with verse 21 and the two things that we're going to look at today Jesus goes and he visits a synagogue and uh there's a couple of things that happened that we're going to touch on one people were really impressed and amazed by the authority that he spoke with and we're going to talk about kind of what that means uh and just a little bit more into the authority that he spoke with and the other thing that happened was there was a demon that was cast out and uh people were astonished at that whole scene and it says at the end of this section that uh that Jesus's fame started to spread so this is one of the early uh incidences where Jesus did something that caused his fame to spread throughout the area so let's go ahead and read this Mark chapter 1 verse 21 it says this then they went into

Capernaum and immediately on the Sabbath he entered the synagogue and he taught and they were astonished at his teaching for he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes so we'll stop there and just focus on this a little bit so the first thing I wanted to talk about was well what is this whole thing called a synagogue anyway and I'm sure most of us have heard about synagogues synagogues are not just something that were around back then synagogues are something that are around today and synagogues you can kind of think it think of it as just like a church for Jewish people it doesn't operate quite the same way but uh but you know you can think of it that way one of the interesting things to point out is you might think well this whole synagogue thing is something that would probably happened really early on with the Jews but this whole concept of a synagogue is actually a fairly new idea in fact as we read about it in the gospels and in the new testament this is really one of the very first times you hear about this idea of a synagogue synagogue was not something that was part of Jewish law Jewish ritual Jewish tradition from early on it's not something that Moses wrote or prescribed in the in the law but it was something that most people think came about during what we call the intertestamental period the period between when the old testament ends and when the new testament starts a period of about 400 years and people don't really know exactly when it started in fact a lot of what scholars know about the the early forming of these Jewish synagogues is from the bible from the gospels and from the book of acts and so a synagogue it seems was just a place where Jews would meet a lot of times it would be outside of the nation of Israel these synagogues would be established people would people who were dispersed because of persecution or because of the Babylonian captivity or whatever Jews would establish a synagogue if they had the resources if they had a money if they had the money one of the things we see when Paul goes around in the book of acts he's traveling around and sometimes they'll meet with some Jewish people and sometimes there'll be a synagogue and other times there will just be Jews gathered by the river and so in those cases they didn't have the resources maybe the money to build a synagogue we read in some places where maybe a Roman centurion actually built a synagogue for the

[8 : 29] Jews because he loved the Jews but a synagogue was just a place of meeting where people would meet for prayer and there would be some kind of reading of the scriptures sometimes teaching by a teacher a rabbi or a scribe as we'll see as we it's kind of talked about here Jesus was considered a rabbi he was called rabbi by many which just means simply teacher but when you had a synagogue meeting there wasn't like we are familiar with today in churches there wasn't like a pastor sometimes there was a kind of the ruler of the synagogue or the leader but they were not they're like a spiritual leader they were just somebody who kind of was a facilitator and so when you had a synagogue you would go you would maybe pray you would have readings from scripture and sometimes people would give a teaching if you had a visitor from out of town especially someone who was known for being a teacher maybe a pharisee or a or a rabbi or a scribe you would ask that hey would you be willing to share something and so when Jesus came to Capernaum it says on the sabbath day he went into the synagogue and taught and i'm sure that he had gone into synagogues many times before that but uh here's the interesting things that says that they were astonished at his teaching for he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes they were astonished so Jesus came teaching they were astonished because this was different this was not what they were used to this is not what they had experienced in the past with others who taught them and so how would the scribes teach well one of the things i think it's we can point out that Jesus actually talks about is uh he talked about the scribes and pharisees in fact we'll read here from Matthew chapter 23 if you're familiar with that chapter it's a chapter of woes in which Jesus has a lot of proclamation of woes against the scribes and the pharisees calling them hypocrites so in Matthew chapter 23 verse 25 he says this woe to you scribes and pharisees you hypocrites for you cleanse the outside of the cup and the dish but inside you are full of extortion and self-indulgence a few verses later he says you're whitewashed sepulchers tombs that are full of dead men's bones and that whole chapter is him talking about all their traditions the traditions that they would teach but many times their traditions would undermine the word of God and so that's what people were used to scribes would come in they would teach and a lot of times the teaching would be traditions things that had been kind of accumulated as traditions over the years then when you had maybe teachings on scriptures a lot of times instead of sharing you know here's a scripture and this is what it means they would these teachers these scribes these pharisees would teach well here's this scripture and here's what rabbi so-and-so says about it and then the other rabbi so-and-so and such and such this is what he says about it and then there's this other rabbi and this is what he says about it and they all contradict each other a lot of times and so well who's right well nobody knows you know you can't be sure

and so there would be traditions and then there would be just suggestions about here's here's an idea from so-and-so on what this means the other thing that would happen a lot with these scribes is there would be a lot of debating about minutia about minor points in the in the scriptures there's actually a collection of commentaries that were passed down orally in fact probably started to establish these things these oral traditions that were originally were eventually written down over time not long after the time of jesus one of those books is called the talmud there's several others the mishnah and if you read these there's all kinds of minor debates or rules about all these little things and just one example is is it okay for a jew on the sabbath day to lift up a utensil a fork or a knife or to grab a utensil out of the drawer and set it on the table for example in celebration of passover and so lots of these little debates and so you might imagine that those are the kinds of things that we read in some of these books that these are the kinds of things that were happening in the jewish synagogue so when jesus came on the scene and started teaching it was very different from what they had experienced and so what does it mean that he taught with authority does that just mean that he pounded his fist on the pulpit and you know used commanding language i i don't think so though i don't know he may he may have used a commanding may have been a commanding presence or not maybe jesus wasn't in fact you know when we read the old testament scriptures especially isaiah 53 about jesus it kind of says well there was he was uncomely he was he was not somebody that you would think of as a as a as a as a big presence but we don't know for sure one of the things in which he preached with authority was because he was the authority one of the things that jesus said he said i am the way i am the truth and i am the life is that authoritative is that different from what anybody else was teaching them absolutely i'm the way i am the truth and i am the life at the life jesus is the way he is the truth bible says in john he is the word of god made flesh the other the other thing i'd like to point out is one of the things when jesus spoke you know the prophets of old they would say i have a message from god for you people and they spoke with authority this is a message from god they would say thus say thus saith the lord in the king james or thus here's what the lord says jesus never said that ever in his whole ministry never said thus saith the lord but there's this phrase that jesus used many times over and it's translated differently in different translations but truly truly i say unto you or verily verily i say unto you

wow that's authoritative isn't it not this is what god says even though that has authority to it but this is a whole different level verily verily i say unto you that's authority the other thing to point out is that when you teach and preach and demonstrate the truth the truth itself is authoritative jesus when he spoke he spoke with confidence because he knew what he was talking about he spoke with clarity he didn't mince words he didn't use generalizations and he spoke truth that was piercing piercing to the heart piercing to the soul just a couple of examples of jesus's teaching one of the things that jesus taught he said he said if your hand causes you to sin you should cut it off if your eye causes you to sin gouge it out that's kind of a shocking visual and something for somebody to say but his whole point was listen sin is not a joke sin is not something that we laugh at or just kind of oh oh well we're all sinners that's just what we do sin was not a joke and his kind of stunning visual on how sin ought to be treated and you know we shouldn't be deceived can you uh if you cut off your hand and gouge out your eyes will that stop you from sinning no it won't but jesus made this point and he finished up with this when he taught this he said it's better for you to go unto life eternal life with some of your members missing than for you to go into to eternal destruction with your whole body intact man imagine hearing that after hearing all these scribes and pharisees kind of debating about utensils and all these different things and here comes someone on the scene and they get down to and the brass tacks they get down to what really what really matters another thing that jesus talked about he says you have heard that it was said do not commit adultery but i tell you and he's quoting from what that's the law you've heard that was said do not commit adultery but i tell you that if you look upon a woman to lust after her you have committed adultery already with her in your heart man that's piercing truth gets that you know some people they have pride because well i've never committed adultery yet their imagination is full of adultery jesus got to the heart of the matter another thing that he taught whoever wants to be the greatest must be the servant of all what a just a stunning concept and an idea and that's something that you're going to hear from the scribes and the pharisees if you want to be the greatest and there was lots of people vying for power and greatness but if you want to be the greatest you need to become the servant of all the father of all so just another thing to talk about i'm sorry i'm gonna i'm using technology here

and it's failing me so i'm going to switch switch devices here for my notes but uh just talking about authority and confidence in the culture in which we live when jesus when he taught with authority it instilled something in his hearers it instilled confidence in the truth of what he was saying people could be sure certain of what the truth is of what he was saying and that's one of the purposes of authority in teaching we live in what many today call a post modern culture what does that mean you hear the phrase post-modernism and it's a it's something that is compared or contrasted with modernism post-modernism is a big word it's just used to describe what might be better described as relativism well truth is just kind of something that we each have you have your truth i have my truth and so um you you just live by your truth you live your truth i'll live my truth and we'll all we'll all just be happy but that's not how truth works truth is not subjective it's not something that's just true for us truth is something that is an objective part of reality something that's true for everyone and so there have been movements even in christian circles to try to undermine this idea of truth well can you really know anything for sure and so if you go out into a college campus and i've done this several times and talk to people and try to bring some level of truth whether it be you know ethan goes out a lot talks to people about abortion violence i've gone out on different places and talked to people about the gospel and people will say well can you you can't really know anything for sure and that's what you that's a that's a statement or a claim is what you call self-defeating you can't really know anything for sure oh are you sure about that it has no legs to stand on it's self-defeating of course we can know many things for sure and this whole book this bible is meant for us to know the truth not just for us to guess not just for us to walk around in darkness in john chapter 8 verse 32 jesus said this and you shall guess what the truth is and you'll wonder about the truth you'll have a conversation about the truth and that shall set you free is that what it says no many of us are familiar with that you shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free truth is meant to be known to be certain of in first john chapter 5 verse 13 john talks about why did i write this letter this whole epistle he says in chapter 5 verse 13 these things i have written to you who believe in the name of the son of god that you may know that you have eternal life and that you may continue to believe in the name of the son of god that's what the scriptures are for that we would know the truth do we know everything

no not everything is revealed and some things are somewhat cloudy when it comes to especially future things right there's a haziness around it and i think that's intentional but when it comes to things like can you know that you have eternal life absolutely absolutely and if you don't know some people think well i'll just never know maybe one day after i die then i'll find out then whether i had eternal life god forbid you can know now that you have eternal life through jesus christ there was 10 years ago and i guess maybe it's still around but maybe maybe it's more than 10 years ago there's a movement that they called the emerging church movement does anybody remember that anybody no a few and this movement there was popular books written and lots of this is kind of when blogs first started and there was a lot of people that started these blogs and were writing and it was these new ideas ideas and this was influenced by post-modernism and this emerging church movement was a lot of people who were saying well you know reading the bible is more about having a conversation and just kind of talking about things but when people say well you know this particular uh moral behavior is wrong well we shouldn't go that far that's too that's too heavy-handed we can't know these things for sure so we just need to have a conversation i have a few quotes here a guy named brian mclaren he's still around he wrote a book called a generous orthodoxy there's a quote from his book book he says ask me of christianity my version of it yours the pope's whoever's ask me if my christianity is orthodox meaning true and here's my honest answer a little but not yet to be a christian in a generously orthodox way is not to claim to have the truth captured stuffed and mounted on the wall but we keep asking we keep asking and that's what christianity is about it's just asking questions continually perpetually and that's a that's a horrific lie in fact i think jesus said something about this didn't he in matthew chapter 7 verse 7 jesus says ask and it will be given to you seek and you will find he doesn't say seek and keep sinking and never finding is that what it says no jesus said seek and you will find seeking is necessary asking the questions are necessary having a conversation is needed but the whole purpose is to find the truth to find the answers christianity is not about having an eternal conversation and never finding answers christianity is about getting a hold of the solid rock the truth about jesus christ the truth of jesus christ jesus christ is the truth and using that solid rock as a foundation to put under your feet in order to live life because if you're always having a conversation if you don't have that solid rock of truth you're always on shaky ground always on shifting sand there's another guy rob bell he's still around too he wrote a book called velvet elvis here's a quote from his book what if tomorrow someone digs up definitive proof that jesus had a real

[28 : 53] earthly biological father named larry and archaeologists find larry's tomb and do dna samples and prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that the virgin birth was just a bit of mythologizing a bit of mythologizing the gospel writers threw in to appeal to the followers of the mithra and the dionysians the religious cults that were hugely popular at the time of jesus could you still be a christian is the way of jesus still the best way to live so you say hey the bible doesn't necessarily have to be like true true it's still a good book to kind of teach you how to live a you know a pretty good life being a forgiving person you don't necessarily have to believe that jesus was born of god that he was born of a virgin you don't even necessarily have to believe that jesus rose from the dead but what does the scripture say what does paul say if christ is not raised our faith is in vain it is it's futile it's useless it's worthless christianity means nothing it's worth it's worse than worthless if jesus didn't rise from the dead we're staking our faith our eternity on what's in this book it better be true and if it's not we should just throw it in the trash because it doesn't matter you know what you know some jewish guy or you know whoever had some cool ideas and decided to write some cool stories and miss none of that matters what i want to know is what's true and that's what this bible purports to tell us the bible the scriptures themselves say what is in here is true and this is not anything that's new this uh post-modernism or uh this emerging church thing that was kind of a i think a flash in the pan i don't know i guess there's still things around they just have different names and it's always shifting but it's been happening from the very beginning it's just all all the time being repackaged into into new packages in fact it makes me think of the very beginning right did god really say that's what the serpent said to to eve did god really say questioning the truth of god's word so another thing to another question to ask should we teach with authority you know i mean who do we think that we are do we think that we have a grasp on all truth so should we just kind of constantly be asking questions should i get up here and just give a message just asking 25 good questions that we can all think about well there's again there's nothing wrong with asking questions but i think it's important that we god gave us the truth in this book that we could give it out we shouldn't be shy about the truth we should teach authoritatively whether it's from a pulpit as a father and mother in your home whether it's talking to a co-worker at work about the gospel or about things that matter we should speak authority authoritatively about things that we understand and like i said we can gain understanding from this book but i have seen people who teach authoritatively about things they have no idea about and many times those people can deceive others because sometimes just teaching

with a veneer of authority pounding your fist or things of that nature commanding voice can be enough to convince someone that you know what you're talking about we should of course be like the bereans were and always take anything that we hear and run it past the scriptures run it past the word of god and teachers those who teach whether from a pulpit or from from your home we need to be careful not to use an air of authority when we're really uncertain and that's one of the things i appreciated when we came here six years ago listening to pastor marv you know sometimes he would say you know what i'm not sure about this you don't hear that a lot from from pulpits or from bible teachers i'm not sure about this that's okay we don't have to know everything there are some things that are more important some things that we should focus on we really need to figure out but there's a lot of detail in the bible and we're not going to figure it all out and that's okay so speaking with authority on matters that we're uncertain about is dangerous ground in fact the bible talks about people who teach being held to a higher amount of accountability the authority that we have when we teach the truth is not does not come from ourselves it's not based on how much money we have or how much education we have some people will put a phd behind their name or something like that none of that matters i mean it's all it can be good right it can be helpful but none of those things provide the authority the authority behind the truth comes from where comes from the word of god reminds me of the story uh this guy i know he was in a church and he was talking to i don't know if it was a friend or somebody and mentioned that you know the bible says that on the day of judgment the believers christians will actually judge the angels and they said that's not true what are you talking about he says no it's in the bible i've never read that so he opened up the bible first corinthians chapter 6 verse 3 says this do you not know that we shall judge angels how much more things that pertain to this life so paul taught the corinthians and the person read it and he says no that's not what that means is this what it says it right there no i've never heard that before and then i don't know if this is sometime later or whatever but i think this person opened up their they're like study bible or commentary and open it up and right there the commentator says christian believers will judge angels on the day of judgment they said oh look you're right and so just one example right people looking to others for authority but missing the very words of god we look to others well can i really know the truth you can we don't always get it right but god intended for us to know what is true we're going to continue on here in um and verse 23 so again mark chapter 1 verse 23 this is continuing they're still in the synagogue jesus is teaching it says now there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit and he cried out that's kind of weird

saying let us alone what have we to do with you jesus of nazareth did you come to destroy us i know who you are the holy one of god but jesus rebuked him saying be quiet and come out of him and when the unclean spirit had convulsed him and cried out with a loud voice he came out of him then they were all amazed so that they questioned among themselves saying what is this what new doctrine is this for with authority he commands even the unclean spirits and they obey him and immediately his fame spread throughout all the region of galilee so you have this authoritative teaching and then all of a sudden some more authority you know the spiritual realm is very real and in the day in which we live which tends to be very materialistic you know there's only really atoms and molecules in the world there's no god there's no spiritual aspect to our lives these kinds of things are diminished demons are real evil spirits satan himself we read about the temptation of christ by satan himself demonization people being demonized or sometimes we call demon possession is real you know in our culture these things are not really talked about as much though it's becoming more so i've found over the last 30 years but if you go to other countries there people talk about evil spirits very openly i was a missionary for a short time a few months in the nation of cambodia and one of the interesting things there in cambodia is every time you build a house if you have a house or even a business you don't build a house you don't have a business without having a spirit house just outside you put a spirit house right outside your your home and there would be ornately decorated kind of like a i mean some of them were really tiny some more bigger very colorful sometimes look like little temples or something like that and many times you would see there would be fruit or some kind of food or other things sitting there like on an altar and the purpose of the spirit house was to appease the evil spirits to keep them out of your house so the idea is well if i can appease with some delicious fruit a nice little house for the spirit maybe he'll hang out there and he won't come into my house or maybe it will be enough to if i give these offerings to these spirits they'll help the other more malevolent spirits from they'll keep them from coming into my house and disturbing me or bothering me this is widespread across the country it was not just in cambodia this kind of thing is in the philippines and a lot of other places especially in in asia and so in our culture you know these kinds of things are diminished but in other cultures the spiritual world is very real to people just looking at this particular account i want to observe a few things about this specific evil spirit it was speaking through the man it spoke up and well how does the spirit speak spirit does not have vocal cords but in this case was speaking through the man and one of the things that it said was let us alone well what does that mean let us alone you know

there are accounts in the scriptures where a single person is possessed or demonized by multitudes of spirits mary magdalene it says that seven spirits were cast out of her the demoniac which will i think is later on in mark uh what did he say his name was legion for we are many he said in this case though it sounds like there was just one spirit but he's talking about him and his compadres his comrades and he said did you come to destroy us there's another place in matthew chapter 8 29 a similar account where someone cries out and the spirit says have you come here to torment us before the time and so these spirits in this case this spirit was afraid here is jesus this is god the son come down from heaven are you going to destroy us at this time is this when we're going to meet our doom this is a spirit this is a spirit that was afraid as spirit ought to be in the presence of god but evil spirits it seems know that their time is short that their destruction will come at some point in the future does that stop them from trying to you know work evil in the lives of men it doesn't the other thing that he said is i know who you are this spirit knew who jesus was he recognized him as the holy one of god so what was jesus's response what did jesus say the first thing he said was shut up be quiet i don't want you to say anything well why would he say that why does it matter if he says anything or not well i think the primary reason he told him to be quiet was because hey you're you're kind of letting the cat out of the bag jesus kind of took his time in letting people know who he was as you read through the gospels you'll see that many times he would heal someone or he says don't tell anybody about this keep it keep it quiet for now because as we see the more popular he got the more pushback that he got from the pharisees and the leaders of the jews and so i think especially early on in his ministry he wanted to keep certain things quiet specifically about who he was so we didn't want this spirit just declaring all about him and then he commanded him to come out commanded the spirit to leave the man's body and when and this is what amazed them because i don't think that these people were unfamiliar with this spiritual demonic activity and the during this time uh occultism a demonic type things were fairly fairly common more than maybe we see today in the culture in which we live at least here in america though like i said earlier that is that is changing fairly quickly but what did amaze them was that somebody spoke a word come out and that spirit immediately obeyed now there was a little bit of a fight in this we call it a deliverance it says a few things it says it convulsed him there was a little bit of a struggle here in this spirit coming out of this man's body and then cried out there was this physical struggle between this evil spirit and this man's body and

then like i said what was the people's response they were amazed i mean if you saw this would you be kind of amazed they'd never saw anything like this before he has this authority over demon spirits they'd never seen someone and i'm sure in fact we read in other parts of scriptures where there were people who were called exorcists even the jews had their own but they kind of struggled you know they tried to deal with these demonic activities but they didn't always succeed it seems we'll actually read a passage in a second where this happens but in this case just with the word leave and it left he had authority you know idolatry in many times in the old testament was called the worship of demons and so in roman culture greek culture idolatry was just rampant worshiping of false gods and you'll see many times both in the old and new testament in fact i wrote down a few leuiticus 17 7 they shall no more offer their sacrifices to demons that was part of the law after whom they have played the harlot and in first corinthians 10 20 paul says rather that the things which the gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to god and i do not want you to have fellowship with demons he's talking about eating meat sacrifice to idols and being careful about that he says you know it's not you don't have to worry it's not as if meat sacrifice to idols is going to like cause you know evil to get in you or something like that but you should avoid kind of giving credence in any way to that kind of thing but he calls that meat sacrifice to idols as something sacrificed to demons so a few questions as we wrap up here that kind of come out from this how was it that this man became in this state became afflicted controlled in some way you know we have this word demon possessed and it's actually sometimes in our bibles but that kind of word isn't really in the bible there's a word that if you translate it literally just means demonized sometimes it's called having a demon and so these evil spirits would have um certain effects on people and torment torment people or sometimes not there isn't anywhere in any place that i can see where it's told especially in the new testament where how somebody became afflicted by a demon but it seems to me that the most likely way that this happened was through one idolatry and two occult practices which were so common and really part and parcel these were the same thing idolatry included many occult practices things like witchcraft and magic fortune telling mediums and so i wanted to look uh to kind of support that thesis look at acts chapter 16 so we'll look at this passage acts chapter 16 verse 16 now it happened as he went to prayer that a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination met us who brought her masters much profit by fortune telling it was a slave girl and she had she was a slave so she had owners and brought much profit they would sell people fortunes and

[49 : 13] this happens today doesn't it anybody driving down the road and you see fortune teller or tarot cards or crystal balls or things like that come to us and we'll tell you your fortune this girl followed paul and us and cried out saying these men are the servants of the most high god who proclaim to us the way of salvation and this she did for many days but paul greatly annoyed turned and said to the spirit i command you in the name of jesus to come out of her and he came out that very hour but when her master saw that their hope of profit was gone they seized paul and silas and dragged them into the marketplace to the authorities and so there's more to the story there but it's just one account there was a spirit that was behind all this so this was a girl slave girl who brought profit through fortune telling through a practice of really witchcraft magic occultism try to tell people their fortunes and definitely it sounds like had a certain amount of success with this people would come to her and pay big bucks to come hear about their fortune things about their lives and so it seems to me as i read scriptures that these kinds of demonic activities these kind of demonic oppression typically happens when people get involved in these types of occult activities because of time's sake there's another account in acts chapter 19 in which there are there's a story of some jews who were trying to cast out a spirit uh according to the name of jesus whom paul preaches they said and they got into big trouble because they didn't have the authority that paul had to cast these spirits out and so that basically they get beat up by these that are possessed of demons and um but paul it says through uh it says laying on of handkerchiefs and laying on of hands he was able to cast out just like jesus was these spirits with a word and it says after that that many people who believed i think it says believed anyway they came and they all took their books of magic and witchcraft and they burned them there's this connection here between occultism between witchcraft and spiritual demonic demonic activity so is there demonic activity today or is this something that only happened back then and really the devil is maybe doing different things or maybe he's just hanging out sleeping on vacation is the devil on vacation he's not is he but i think the devil does the devil and his horde of of evil doers of evil spirits uh they're definitely active but in different ways and i think it's strategic one the bible is very clear that the devil is kind of the not the only source but a source of temptation look out for temptation he is called the tempter and also the deceiver satan himself and so the devil acts in secret he works in secret working in secret ways to try to impact people for evil and then i think today continues to work also out in the open typically through occultism and occult practices i did a little bit of research on occultism in america i found an interesting article that talked about the rise of occultism in in 1980 there was a poll done it was determined there were about 8 000 people in america that practiced

wicca which is witchcraft and then in 2008 another poll indicated that there were 342 000 people that were involved in witchcraft in 2014 this is almost 10 years ago they they showed that about a half a percent of the population which is well over a million people were involved in either witchcraft paganism or some form of new age type practices i did a search at our local library to look up books on wicca witchcraft hundreds and hundreds of results came up books audio video and how to practice witchcraft cast spells talk to the dead these types of things so modern occult practices continue today just like they did back then mediums people who invite spirits into their body in order to try to speak for the dead typically but the bible actually calls them in some places familiar spirits and so you know you might see something like this in fact i've i've seen uh television shows where they have these kinds of things where they'll have a medium come on and try to you know bring back your lost loved one to talk to you but it seems from the bible it's pretty clear that that's not something that actually really happens but i and and i'm sure people will probably make it up right you could you could deceive people but it's also very real in leviticus chapter 19 verse 31 it says in the law give no regard to mediums and familiar spirits do not seek after them to be defiled by them i am the lord your god and in the next chapter 20 verse 27 a man or a woman who is a medium and who has familiar spirits shall surely be put to death they shall stone them with stones their blood shall be upon them god was not messing around with this stuff this is vile this is wicked stay away from it and don't allow don't allow people to get involved in this stuff but you can imagine when you if a person invites a spirit into their body that might cause some problems later on right fortune telling uh ouija board was really popular what back in the 50s or 60s or whenever that came out where people basically you know you're looking for i need help from the spirit world to help me basically give me my fortune through this game you have witchcraft and wicca shamanism i have a friend who is a christian today but he was a shaman and practiced witchcraft in the past and has stories that will um well that are very interesting to say the least but i've seen indications of people building altars to demons and casting spells and doing what they can to speak to spirits in exodus 22 verse 18 the law says this you shall not permit a sorceress to live witchcraft is not something that god in any way tolerated so it seems you know with all this spiritual demonic activity that god has allowed satan some level some leeway in the world to to have an influence and we know through temptation that's a big one but also through this occultism and

other demonic activity he calls satan the ruler of this world or the ruler of this age in some places the god even the god of this age but where do we as believers stand is this something that we should fear i think not at all demonic powers don't have any real authority over us but so a few just a couple of things to finish off in colossians chapter 1 verse 13 this is what paul says about believers position paul says he has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the son of his love in whom we have redemption through his blood the forgiveness of sins when you trust in christ you are conveyed or transferred from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light the kingdom of his son and the power that the devil may have had over us he has no more we are bought we are purchased by the blood of christ the kingdom of the kingdom of the kingdom of the kingdom of the kingdom of the kingdom yet there's still a battle isn't there still a spiritual battle it's not the it's not a it's not a battle that we always see though sometimes we see the manifestations of it i was at an event this is a pro-life event many years ago probably almost 20 years ago in which a group of there was probably 200 christians came to the city of columbus and we were there to expose the abortion practices the abortion violence there in the city of columbus this is the first event i had ever been to like this of a bunch of christians coming out and they were i don't know you might call them protests or demonstrations i think is maybe maybe a better word for it and there were all these pro-abortion people who came to kind of counter what we were doing and so it became somewhat of a of a circus but there was this really interesting as i went out there each day there was a guy who who was against opposed to what we're doing very pro-abortion and he um i thought he was a school teacher taught in the public school system he had long hair but seemed like a pretty normal guy and over that week every week he he kind of looked more and more different and he came out and he was so upset with all the different things that we were doing he would show up at different events by the end of that week his head was completely shaved and he was walking around all of our events burning incense and chanting different occultic things and uh it was it was bizarre but over the years especially being involved in the battle against abortion violence i have met so many people who identify as witches people involved in the occult and you can see how those things seem to go hand in hand abortion violence and occultism ephesians chapter 6 verse 10 says this finally my brethren be strong in the lord and in the power of his might put on the whole armor of god that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil for we do not

wrestle against flesh and blood but against principalities against powers against the rulers of the darkness of this age against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places therefore take up the whole armor of god that you may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all to stand we have a battle that we're continuing to fight a battle for the souls of men and we have an opponent somebody who's battling us trying to get us out of the battle out of the fight tempt us with different things and we need to stand stand up against those things and fight against those those spiritual attacks so that we can be effective in bringing the gospel to those those who need it um i'm going to end there and uh we'll go ahead and get the mic ready if we if we have any questions um you know going back to that verse in in colossians he has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the son of his love there are two kingdoms and you are either part of one or part of the other there is no neutral ground there is no switzerland in this war you're either on the side of god on the side of darkness and god offers to everyone and it doesn't matter right well i'm not involved in that those occultic practices well are you are you a child of god god because the scriptures indicate that it's one or the other either you're one of his or one of the devil's but god promises us this if you'll just trust in jesus christ trust in him and the death that he paid for your benefit there's no battle to fight against the devil jesus already won the battle you just trust in him and you're transferred you're conveyed from that kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of his dear son just like that from darkness to light amen all right any thoughts questions uh and we don't have to but if anybody had any anything pressing go ahead scott i guess when we're judging the angels that would be the fallen angels is that correct i imagine so that's what i imagine yeah it seems if you read through scripture it seems that there were you know uh god created angels and some of them fell and others did not and so one day all those angels will be find their their end with with satan himself and uh seems like we'll be part of part of that judgment process anyone else up here hi when it said that the uh in my bible it said the itinerant exorcist were the ones who tried to deliver uh someone and they were actually they didn't succeed and they were actually beat up themselves yeah um that brings me to the question of what is uh required to be able to you know deliver someone is it just knowing the word or is it to be born again or you know why did they fail and what do you need to succeed yeah with that um

with that uh portion of scripture that's the one that we didn't read in in acts was it chapter 19 or 20 and it seems they were jews it didn't doesn't sound like they were believers in jesus because they want they said you know the jesus that paul preaches this wasn't the jesus that they preached it was the jesus that that paul preached you know that's i think a uh a question i'm not sure i'm totally prepared uh uh to answer it seems that paul and so jesus had authority to cast out demons with a word he gave that authority to his disciples it says and then it seems that was given to paul as well and so um you know when it comes to uh like for example that guy that i described and i'm you know who one of the things i think it's important to realize is that the the world of evil spirits is not like this infinite vast scape of you know infinite uh entities there's a limited amount of of evil spirits and so they can't be involved in everyone's life um so you can't just imagine that anybody who's you know doing demonic things or whatever actually has some kind of evil spirit involved um but i you know i don't know that i can say for sure what kind of authority we might have to to deal with those things though i can't say for somebody who's a believer we have every bit of authority we live in christ there are no uh there is no right for for evil spirits to in any way oppress or or trouble us in any kind of way so that's as that's as much i think as i i'm okay with saying there do you have something darling what you said about satan works in secret everybody knows about him why is that yeah satan works in secret so he does things without revealing himself so people think there's a temptation and they think that it's from something else but but not him some people for some people satan doesn't want them to know that he even exists and that's a that's better for him he can be more productive if that's the case so that's what i meant about that okay out in the back and run the back uh i have some announcements i hate to mess up the discussion here but uh marvis elphors requested for people to consider visiting mike yeah because he's prone to fall so that she can go about her get her business done you know from groceries and meetings and stuff like that also joel mcgarvey from bible doctrines that live by is coming july the second for both services you remember that don't you yep okay and then uh the guys on the security team and anybody else but definitely the security team we will be shooting at five o'clock with jamie out at the springfield range so uh that's when jamie wants to do it wednesday yeah wednesday wednesday at five o'clock five o'clock is that open to anybody or it can be yeah and be but if you're on the security team it's required yeah if you haven't already uh qualified or whatever okay great thank you yeah so marvis um um yeah so yeah if you should they call first or what's what's the so just call marvis and her

[69 : 27] numbers in the uh directory so give a call and and come out and visit and uh and help them out what's that i got the bird feeder right outside the window the bird feeder so mike's checking out the birds that's great let's close in a word of prayer father we thank you for your word thank you for your willingness to do so much to die on the cross for us that we might be transferred from from darkness to light and that we can have confidence in you and confidence in your word and your truth that we might boldly proclaim your truth in a world that needs it desperately in jesus name amen thanks everyone