

Our Attitude of Coming to the Meetings¹ [1]
'Unser Herr lebt', issue 20
Gotthold Beck

Mark

1:21 And they went into Capernaum. and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught.

1:22 And they were astonished at his doctrine. for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

1:23 And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. and he cried out,

1:24 Saying. Let us alone. what have we to do with you, you Jesus of Nazareth? are you come to destroy us? I know you who you are, the Holy One of God.

1:25 And Jesus rebuked him, saying. Hold your peace, and come out of him.

1:26 And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him.

1:27 And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying. What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commands he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.

1:28 And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.

What attitude should we take when we gather to worship? How did the Lord Jesus and the brothers and sisters of the early churches prepare their minds when they went into their churches?

At that time, the Lord Jesus always entered the churches to preach the Gospel. However, whenever gospels were preached, the devil was always there to disturb them. It is also true to say that the Lord Jesus entered the churches to defeat the devil. The only weapon the Lord Jesus could use to beat the devil was the words from the Bible. Jesus came to the churches neither to impress the audience with wonderful sermons nor to be praised by them; He went to assault the devil.

1. Jesus attacks the devil.

In Jesus' time, Rabbis had the highest education. They had a thorough knowledge of the Old Testament and taught the Bible every Sabbath. However, there was a huge difference between the Lord Jesus and these scribes of those days.

Mark

¹ 主は生きておられる 20 号、『どういふ心構えで集会に集うべきでしょうか』の英訳です

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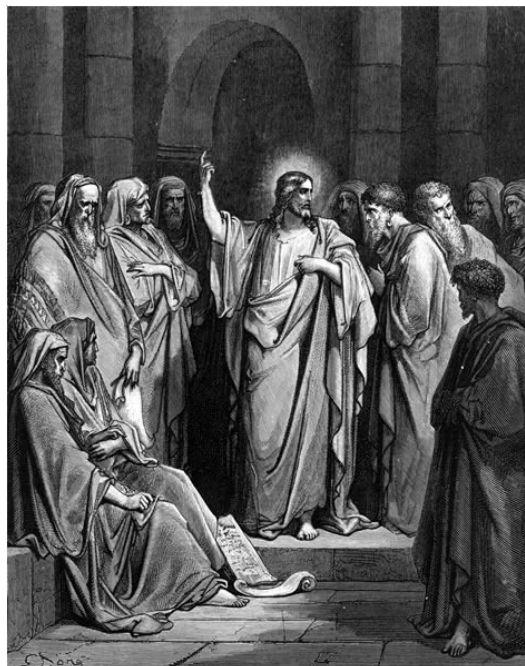
1:27 And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying. What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commands he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.

The new teachings of the Lord Jesus opened the eyes of the people. Today, some people are still tied to the old teachings based on human knowledge, while others follow the new teachings of the Lord Jesus.

Those who don't have the authority of the True God are in need of humans' knowledge. However, the wisdom of men cannot truly wake up humans. It cannot bring people back from their sleep; it is rather a drug that sends them into a spiritual sleep. The Lord Jesus went into the synagogue in Capernaum and began to teach, to attack the devil. There was a man in the synagogue who was possessed by a filthy demon. He had been made into a slave of the devil, and the demon was speaking through his mouth. Demon-possessed men are under control of the devil and thus, are extremely dangerous.

Mark

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1:24 Saying. Let us alone. what have we to do with you, you Jesus of Nazareth? are you come to destroy us? I know you who you are, the Holy One of God.



This man possessed by the filthy demon used the plural pronoun 'us'. This represented the demons living inside him. The demons knew about Jesus. This indicated that the demons understood that the Lord Jesus was the Son of the true living God; they said, "I know who you are, the Holy One of God!" It is so amazing that the demons, who were the worst enemies of the Lord Jesus, testified that Jesus was the Holy One of God, who knew no sins. This bears eloquent testimony of the fact that the Lord Jesus is the promised savior, that the Lord Jesus is the true liberator.

It is written in my German Bible that when the demons saw Jesus, they screamed to Him, "Halt!" Jesus always came into the meeting places to drive away the demons, so the demons yelled at Jesus and pled with Him to stop and to not come inside. The Lord Jesus entered synagogues to assault the demons, destroy the devil and save the people. In the meeting places, the devil resisted desperately, and there was always a battle between the Lord Jesus and the filthy spirits. Who was going to win?

Mark

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Our Lord Jesus was always the winner. No devil can withstand Him. The Lord Jesus is the one who wins anytime, anywhere. The Lord Jesus is the Holy One of God. He is as sacred and transparent as light itself. Contrarily, we are humans who are burdened and agonized. So were the members of the early churches. Let's look at the Bible to find out how their attitude was.

2. Believers of the early churches

Acts

2:42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

2:43 And fear came upon every soul. and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

2:44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

2:45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

2:46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

2:47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

One thing is for sure about the people who gathered in the early churches: they read the Bible so earnestly. This is the reason that the Lord could talk to them anytime He wanted. They had intimate communion with each other in those churches, and they rejoiced over breaking bread. They were the people of prayers, and they always were connected with the Lord Jesus. They gathered every day, not only Sundays, and they always had meals together. They were the people who praised the Lord every night and day. The Lord answered their prayers and "the Lord was adding to their number those who were being saved", as told in Acts 2:47. Let's not give up hope and keep praying for the salvation of our families, relatives and friends. If we keep our faith and continue believing in Him, the Lord Jesus can accomplish anything. We do not have to worry about relying on the Lord Jesus too much. In the days of the early churches, there was a day that more than 3000 people were added to the numbers of the believers, as written in Acts 2:31. In addition, soon about 5,000 men believed and were saved, as described in Acts 4:4.

Acts

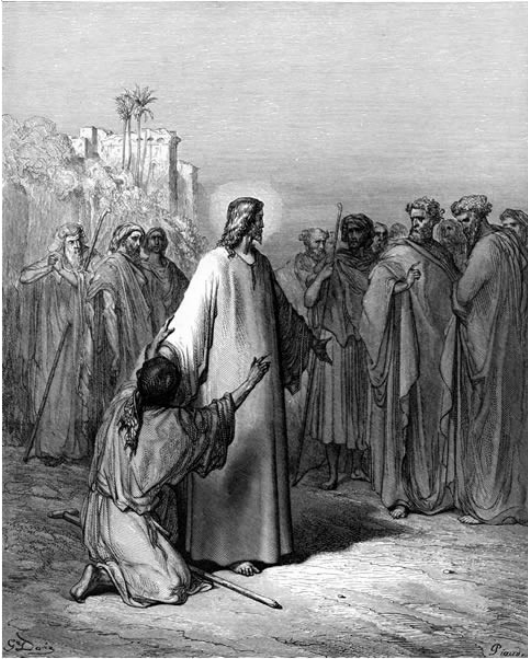
6:7 And the word of God increased. and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly. and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

According to the Bible, within a few weeks after the Pentecost, more than ten thousand people came to believe in the Lord. After they were saved, these people gathered in the churches every day. Although it is unknown how long this continued for, it is written that new believers joined every day. When those who did not yet know the Lord came into the gatherings, they couldn't help but recognize their own sins, worship the Lord and admit that the true living God dwelt inside themselves.

1Corinthians

14:24 But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believes not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all:

14:25 And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest. and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.



Jesus visited the church in Capernaum to do battle against the devil. Similarly, for the members of the early churches, coming to the gathering was itself a way of battling the devil. Members of the early churches gathered to assault the devil and to destroy his works. When they gathered, they had only one desire in their hearts: to find the souls that were ready to accept the Lord and to guide them to Him.

3. Our attitudes

So what are our own attitudes like? Do we truly love the words of God from the bottom of our hearts? Can the Lord talk to our hearts every day? Do we have sincere and intimate communion, as the people in the early churches did? Are we filled with great joy and gladness when we break bread and think of Jesus? Can we say that we are the people of prayers who never stop talking to the Lord Jesus? Do we come to the meetings as often as we can? Are we filled with gratitude and praise the Lord every day just like the brothers and sisters of the early churches?

If we can clearly answer "yes" to all of these questions, the Lord Jesus will save people around us every day.

"Halt!", the demons yelled at Jesus. Demons are still screaming the same words at us today. We are always being attacked by the devil, wherever we are, all day. The devil is attacking us even when we are gathered in assembly. If someone is not assaulted by the devil at all, that person actually is useless, just like blank ammunition. And if the devil does not make any

attempt on you, you won't perceive the danger of the devil, and thus, the Lord Jesus won't need you.

The devil is attacking us. You have to always keep in mind that you are under attack always, everywhere. So, every day when you wake up, please think of the Lord Jesus. Please, always think of the great love that the Lord Jesus gives you and appreciate that Jesus still dwells inside you today.

[1] With Hunger and Thirst for the Lord

When we gather in assembly, do we have the hunger and thirst for the Lord just like the author of the following verses from Psalms?

Psalms

42:1 To the chief Musician, Maschil, for the sons of Korah. As the hart pants after the water brooks, so pants my soul after you, Oh God.

42:2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. when shall I come and appear before God?

When we gather, do we strongly seek the Lord as this author did? Are we prepared to do battle with the devil when we come to the meeting? Do we pray for the speaker of the day before coming to the worship meeting? Very often, speakers find it difficult to talk in some atmospheres. Why is that? It's because the devil never sleeps and is constantly trying to disturb us.

I also urge all speakers to contemplate whether they actually pray seriously so that the Holy Spirit can testify about Jesus in their sermons, instead of just spreading knowledge regarding the Bible. Only the Holy Spirits truly know the Lord Jesus and can testify about Him.

[2] Pray for the people in there

When we come to the assemblies, do we pray for everyone attending? This is extremely important. While you are at your gatherings, please pray for each person there. Please ask Jesus how you can pray for each attendee. If you meet someone who doesn't know the Lord yet, please pray sincerely for them to be led to the Lord Jesus. When you see people who refuse to accept the Lord, you should understand that you are looking at the slaves of devils. The devil's slaves are in the same room with the believers who belong to and are beloved by the Lord. It is no wonder we see some serious conflict there.

[3] Pray for yourself

Of course, you should pray for yourself as well. It is extremely important to always have a strong desire to

know the Lord Jesus better. You should say, "Speak, because your servant is listening" (1 Samuel 3:10), and tell him, "We are becoming more like him" (2 Corinthians 3:18).

Any kind of gathering is much more important than we can ever imagine. When you think that you are the most faithful believer at the gathering, you are actually hindering the work of the Lord Jesus. You have to come to the meeting aspiring to know the Lord Jesus better, to meet the Lord Jesus. Contrarily, if you think of yourself as totally worthless and undeserving of any role in the gathering, it will also disturb the work of the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus always wants to talk with you.

4. The Lord almighty needs you.

The Lord Jesus wants to use you to save the souls of other people. The Lord needs your 'mouth' to let people heading towards destruction know the meaning of salvation. The Lord needs your 'legs' to invite spiritually dead people to the gatherings. You are requested to participate in the work of the Lord Jesus. The Lord needs you.

Having Sunday School is an attack on the devil. The devil tries to hold back all children. He also tries to keep us away from our gatherings. The devil whispers in your ears that your job is more important. The Lord wants to give us his special blessing when we come to worship. People of the early churches gathered every day to worship the Lord and to admire His work.

Our assembly is constantly under the attack of the devil. The devil continues his desperate resistance to keep our souls away from the hands of the Lord Jesus. Whenever we are at our gatherings, we all have to be filled with one desire: the desire to save as many souls as possible for the Lord Jesus.

The Lord Jesus needs you to rescue the souls taken in the hands of the devil and convert them to the children of the God. The Lord can do anything. However, He still needs our hands. Furthermore, He never fails to provide us with all the powers we need to work for Him.

Matthew

10:1 And when he had called to him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

10:8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils. freely you have received, freely give.

It is said in the latter verse that they received it freely, which means that the disciples were given all these powers they needed. The disciples received the power. Did we receive the power too? If we did, we can use that power. The man who can do anything needs you. The Lord is offering you supernatural powers.

The Lord Jesus visited the church at Capernaum to bring down the devil. People in the early churches always gathered to devastate the devil. How about us? When we gather at assemblies today, are we also attacking the devil? Are we leading people to the Lord Jesus? The Lord of the Almighty is asking for our help.