



# Table Talk

By Rev. Timothy J. Swenson • ILT Dean of Chapel

The Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

January 30, 2022

## LUKE 4:31-44

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*"I know who you are—the Holy One of God." Vs. 34*



Jesus travels from Nazareth to Capernaum and, as was his practice, attended synagogue there. While at synagogue, he is challenged by the spirit of an unclean demon who had possessed one of the men. The demon challenges Jesus with the striking announcement of Jesus' name as "the Holy One of God." In the culture of the day, to know someone's name was to have power over them. Jesus refuses to allow any exercise of power by that unclean demon. With an authoritative rebuke, he silences the demon and commands him to "come out" of the man (vs. 35).

What happened singly in the synagogue, happens in multiples as Jesus heals the people who were brought to him at Simon's house (vs. 40). Again, this multiplicity of demons shouted out his identity, "You are the Son of God!" (vs. 41). In response, Jesus again rebuked them and silenced them, depriving them of any exercise of power by their knowing his identity.

Jesus silences the demons, as said above, to prevent them from invoking his name or identity to have power over him. Second, Jesus shuts them up to prevent the premature disclosure of him as the Messiah on their terms and the devil's terms (cf. Luke 4:3, 9). Finally, Jesus silenced the demons so that their identification of him

would not seem as if he and the demons were in collusion (cf. Lk. 11:15ff).

While it may seem quaint and antiquated to speak of diseases and mental illness as demon possession, to do so retains the sense of personal confrontation between Jesus and the demons... between Jesus and the "authorities"... between Jesus and us: you and me, as sinners. When that sense of personal confrontation is lost or set aside in favor of the generic manipulation of concepts, then the personal application of the pronoun "for you" disappears because the reality of the opposing "against you" is lost as well. Forgiveness is not an idea. Salvation is not a concept. These are the deeds of Jesus done both upon you and for you. It's entirely personal. Trust this word: Jesus comes for you!

**Table Talk:** Discuss the nature of personal confrontation in this text.

**Pray:** Heavenly Father, so let me hear the Word of forgiveness that I am held in the complete confidence of Jesus for me. Amen



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**LUKE 4:31-44 ESV**

31 And he went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. And he was teaching them on the Sabbath, 32 and they were astonished at his teaching, for his word possessed authority. 33 And in the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, 34 “Ha! 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.” 35 But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be silent and come out of him!” And when the demon had thrown him down in their midst, he came out of him, having done him no harm. 36 And they were all amazed and said to one another, “What is this word? For with authority and power he commands the unclean spirits, and they come out!” 37 And reports about him went out into every place in the surrounding region.

38 And he arose and left the synagogue and entered Simon’s house. Now Simon’s mother-in-law was ill with a high fever, and they appealed to him on her behalf. 39 And he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her, and immediately she rose and began to serve them.

40 Now when the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to him, and he laid his hands on every one of them and healed them. 41 And demons also came out of many, crying, “You are the Son of God!” But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.

42 And when it was day, he departed and went into a desolate place. And the people sought him and came to him, and would have kept him from leaving them, 43 but he said to them, “I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose.” 44 And he was preaching in the synagogues of Judea.



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