

Luke 9:49

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbad him, because he followeth not with us.

Analysis

Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name (ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου, en tō onomati sou)—John reports encountering an unauthorized exorcist using Jesus's name with apparent effectiveness. The phrase in thy name indicates the man invoked Christ's authority, suggesting genuine faith even without formal attachment to the Twelve. **We forbad him** (ἐκωλύομεν, ekōlyomen)—the imperfect tense suggests repeated prohibition: 'we kept trying to stop him.'

Because he followeth not with us (μεθ' οὐμῶν, meth' hēmōn)—John's exclusivism surfaces: the man lacks apostolic credentials and doesn't travel in their company. Fresh from debating who among them was greatest (9:46), John now polices who belongs in the 'us' at all. The irony is profound: John forbids effective kingdom work because it threatens apostolic monopoly. Jesus will rebuke this sectarian spirit, teaching that kingdom ministry isn't franchised exclusively through the Twelve. Genuine faith demonstrated by kingdom fruit matters more than institutional affiliation.

Historical Context

Jewish exorcists commonly invoked names of power (see Acts 19:13), but this man used Jesus's name with apparent success, suggesting authentic faith. The disciples' reaction reflects their expectation of exclusive authority as Jesus's inner circle. This incident parallels Moses's response when Eldad and Medad prophesied

outside the tabernacle (Numbers 11:26-29)—both reveal the human tendency to restrict God's Spirit to approved channels.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. When have you been tempted to question or restrict genuine kingdom work simply because it happened outside your denominational, theological, or organizational boundaries?
2. How does the success of this unauthorized exorcist challenge assumptions about who is qualified for spiritual ministry and what credentials truly matter in God's economy?

Interlinear Text

Ἄποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰωάννης εἶπεν Ἐπιστάτα εἴδομέν

answered **And** **G3588** **John** **and said** **Master** **we saw**
G611 G1161 G2491 G2036 G1988 G1492

τινα ἐπὶ τῷ ὄνόματί σου ἐκβάλλοντα τά δαιμόνια καὶ

one **in** **G3588** **name** **thy** **casting out** **G3588** **devils** **and**
G5100 G1909 G3686 G4675 G1544 G1140 G2532

ἐκωλύσαμεν αὐτὸν ὅτι οὐκ ἀκολουθεῖ μεθ' ἡμῶν

we forbade **him** **because** **not** **he followeth** **with** **us**
G2967 G846 G3754 G3756 G190 G3326 G2257