

Mark 3:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he straitly charged them that they should not make him known.

Analysis

Jesus 'straitly charged them that they should not make him known.' The word 'straitly' (πολλὰ ἐπετίμα) indicates stern, emphatic command. Jesus silenced demons despite accurate testimony. Why?

1. Messian mission must unfold according to God's timetable
2. demon testimony would confuse people and associate Jesus with evil
3. Jesus' identity must be revealed through works and teaching, not supernatural outbursts.

This 'messianic secret' theme runs throughout Mark—Jesus commands silence until after resurrection (Mark 8:30; 9:9).

Historical Context

In first-century Judaism, false messiahs regularly stirred political unrest, often crushed violently by Rome. Jesus carefully controlled public perception to prevent premature political uprising or misunderstanding. If demon-possessed proclaimed Him 'Son of God,' this could be dismissed as madness or associated with occult powers. Jesus preferred works and teaching to authenticate identity. After resurrection, restraint ended—disciples boldly proclaimed Jesus as Son of God (Acts 2:36; 4:12).

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus' control over demon testimony demonstrate sovereign authority over all revelation?
2. What does the 'messianic secret' teach about God's careful timing in revealing truth?
3. How can you discern true versus false testimony about Jesus, even when facts are accurate?

Interlinear Text

καὶ πολλὰ ἐπετίμα αὐτὸν ἵνα μὴ αὐτὸν φανερὸν
And he straitly charged him G2443 G3361 him known
G2532 G4183 G2008 G846 G5318

ποιήσωσιν

make
G4160

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 12:16 (Parallel theme): And charged them that they should not make him known:

Mark 1:34 (Parallel theme): And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him.

Mark 1:25 (Parallel theme): And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.

Matthew 8:4 (Parallel theme): And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

Acts 16:18 (Parallel theme): And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.

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