

Mark 6:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.

Analysis

And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them. This verse summarizes the Twelve's successful mission, demonstrating Christ's authority extended through His authorized representatives. 'They cast out many devils' (δαιμόνια πολλὰ ἐξέβαλλον, daimonia polla exeballon) shows Jesus' authority over demons wasn't limited to His personal presence—He delegated this power to His disciples. The imperfect tense indicates repeated, ongoing exorcisms throughout their mission. This fulfilled Jesus' commission (v. 7) giving them 'authority over unclean spirits.'

'Anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them' (ῆλειφον ἐλαίω πολλοὺς ἀρρώστους καὶ ἐθεράπευον, ēleiphon elaiō pollous arrōstous kai ethera peuon) describes healing ministry using oil as physical means. The oil wasn't magical but symbolic and medicinal—olive oil had therapeutic uses in ancient medicine. James 5:14-15 continues this practice of anointing sick with oil while praying for healing. The healing power came from God, not the oil itself, but physical means often accompany divine healing. This teaches that God works through both supernatural intervention and natural means (medicine). Reformed theology rejects false dichotomy between faith and medicine—God ordains both miraculous healing and medical means for His purposes.

Historical Context

Olive oil was standard medicinal treatment in ancient world—used for wounds (Luke 10:34), skin conditions, and general health. Its use in healing ministry combined practical medicine with symbolic anointing. The Greek verb ἀλείφω (aleiphō) means to anoint or rub with oil, different from ceremonial anointing (χρίω, chriō). The disciples' successful ministry authenticated Jesus' authority—He not only performed miracles Himself but empowered others to do the same. This distinguished Jesus from other miracle-workers who couldn't delegate their power. The combination of exorcism and healing addressed both spiritual and physical afflictions, comprehensive ministry to whole persons. Ancient magical practices often claimed to cast out demons through elaborate rituals, but the disciples' simple authority 'in Jesus' name' proved superior. Early church continued both exorcism and healing ministry, seeing them as authentication of gospel message (Mark 16:17-18; Acts 3:1-10; 5:12-16). The success of the Twelve's mission encouraged them and vindicated Jesus' choice of these ordinary men as apostles.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does the disciples' successful ministry through Jesus' delegated authority encourage believers today that Christ works through ordinary people commissioned by Him?
2. What does the combination of oil-anointing and healing teach about integrating faith with practical means rather than creating false dichotomy between supernatural and natural?

Interlinear Text

καὶ δαιμόνια πολλοὺς ἐξέβαλλον καὶ ἤλειφον ἐλαίῳ

And **devils**

G2532 G1140

many

G4183

they cast out

G1544

And

G2532

anointed

G218

with oil

G1637

πολλοὺς ἀρρώστους καὶ ἐθεράπευνον

many

G4183

that were sick

G732

And

G2532

healed

G2323

Additional Cross-References

Mark 6:7 (Parallel theme): And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits;

Luke 10:17 (Evil): And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.

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